The National
Future Farmer

Published by the Future Farmers of America June-July 1985

Inside This Issue: The Demanding Road to Stardom
FFA, Puerto Rico Style

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The National
Future Farmer
Published by the Future Farmers of America

June-July, 1985
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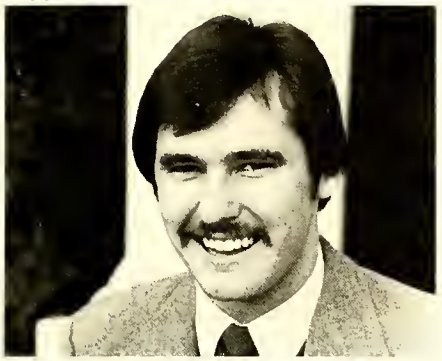
A Word With The Editor

A special thanks for past service to Mike Wilson, who has left the staff of *The National FUTURE FARMER* to become Illinois Editor of *Prairie Farmer*. For Mike, it was an opportunity to return to his native Illinois.



Since 1981, Mike has used his journalistic skills to write for FFA, first as Associate Editor and later as Managing Editor. In these positions, he strongly influenced the editorial content of the FFA magazine. This issue also reflects Mike's contributions as you will find articles with his byline. We wish Mike and his wife Molly the very best as they take up residence in Decatur.

We hope you like the editorial mix in this issue. The variety of articles illustrates the many and varied activities of the FFA members vocational agriculture students. You can travel to Japan with the National FFA Officers . . . visit with your fellow FFA members in Puerto Rico . . . share in the community spirit with Cabool, Missouri, as they build a new vo-ag building . . . learn how computers help in the classroom . . . give a beach a facelift . . . visit with the Star Agribusinessmen of America . . . and more. This sharing of ideas and information through the magazine is one of the benefits of being an FFA member. Be sure the eighth graders in your school know about the vo-ag FFA program when they return to school this fall. They may want to enroll.

Wilson Carnes

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Look what can happen when a community works together.

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To make the pretty prettier and the plain less plain.

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The Cover: *Cover Photo by Michael Wilson*
FFA members from the Highland Chapter in Cowiche, Washington, harvest apples at their school's apple orchard. Advisor Gary Slagg, middle, supervises the annual event. More on Page 16.

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The FFA News in Brief

Nationwide TV Special Draws Attention To Vo-ag

The television special which appeared in many cities and localities in March has brought a great deal of attention to vocational agriculture.

Reactions to "Agriculture's Next Generation: A Conflict of Interest" have been positive. Many local alumni affiliates and FFA chapters have rented or used video tapes they made at the time as meeting programs.

Special efforts by the National FFA Alumni helped create awareness on Capitol Hill about the film. State FFA officers from nearby states delivered broken plates (the promotional poster symbol for the film) and a news release to offices of senators, representatives and other government officials.

The Alumni Association had arranged with the Pfaltzgraff Plate Company of Pennsylvania for the plates and for the Dover Chapter to deliver them to the Center.

The delivery created quite a reaction in most congressional offices.

National Staff Changes

Since the last issue, Managing Editor Michael Wilson has resigned to become Illinois Editor of *Prairie Farmer* magazine. He has relocated to their offices in Decatur, Illinois. Michael joined the FFA magzine staff in 1981.

Clarification About '85 WCP

There seems to be some question about how many participants a chapter may send to the '85 Washington Leadership Conferences.

Unlike other years, a chapter may send three members to any week the conferences are offered; and there is no limit on how many they may send—perhaps a whole officer team—on the first and last weeks of the conferences.

There are eight conferences June 17 through August 3. Contact the National Center for details.

Food For America Program Gets A Face Lift

This fall, every chapter will receive a coupon good for a set of free Food For America kits. After returning the coupons, a set will be mailed to chapters with a Presenter's Kit and a Grade 3-5 Classroom Kit. These kits are all new and have been developed through the increased sponsorship of Mobay Chemical Corporation, Ag Chemicals Division, through the National FFA Foundation.

Welcome To FFA Supporters

The FFA welcomes A. L. Laboratories; Blair Radio; BMB Company, Inc.; and Rhino-Products, Inc. as contributors to the National FFA Foundation general fund. Two general fund sponsors, Champion International Corporation and Vigortone Agriculture Products, have increased their support.

The Cherolet Motor Division (Truck) of the General Motors Corporation has agreed to provide special project support of the National FFA Officer financial scholarships at the end of their terms of office. United Agri Products is a new sponsor for a quarter of the forage proficiency award.

New Ag Ed Network support comes from Cargill, Inc. and the National Peanut Council. Each has sponsored two Ag Ed Network lesson units. Dow Chemical U.S.A. has sponsored 165 daily "Ag Ed Today" commentaries as part of the FFA News on the Network. These sponsorships help make it possibe for Lessons and News to be free on the Ag Ed Network to those vo-ag department subscribers.

FFA Center Staff Fights Fire

Staff members at the National Center worked from 11 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on Friday, April 19, to control fires in the woods surrounding the actual Center building on the property.

A nearby construction site blaze sent hot ashes and sparks across Route 1 and ignited the underbrush, trees, leaves and grass around the FFA office.

Staffers quickly rallied with any available shovel, rake or hoe to combat the many small fires as they cropped up. Eventually every office worker was asked to use waste paper baskets to haul water to help smother the smouldering debris.

FFA Staff Visits 45 Chapters

Recently all national FFA staff members were sent to visit chapters in order to survey members, teachers, principals, guidance counselors and non-FFA students. Visits were made in Texas, California, New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida and Kentucky.

Purpose of the survey was to provide staff members with input for strategic planning and development of directions for the next five years for the organization.

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The Mailbag

Article Agreement

I agree with your article "Sizing Up Used Machinery" (April-May, 1985). It is much cheaper to buy good, used equipment at farm sales rather than new equipment. If you are young and just starting your own business, you can hardly afford new equipment. Nowadays it is hard to make any money at farming because the farmer doesn't get very much money for his crops. So, savings anywhere are welcome.

Randy Harms
Wallace, Nebraska

Wonderful Support

Thank you for letting me tell the story of the wonderful support we received from the Ohio FFA chapters. I hope it will serve as an inspiration not only to Ohio chapters but to chapters nationwide as well.

Denise L. Drake
Assistant Director
The Children's Hospital Foundation
Columbus, Ohio

Appreciation

I am a new subscriber to the magazine and I am already a loyal fan. I especially appreciate your efforts to include articles by and about women who work in agriculture. People like Cindy Blair ("The Sky's The Limit," April-May, 1985) inspire me. What a good model she is for young women in FFA. And fiction by Shirley Jones makes me feel right at home.

Nancy Gurdens
Canton, New York

Concerned Counselor

I would like to take this opportunity to express my pleasure with your magazine. I look forward to reading the many interesting articles published in each edition.

I especially enjoy those articles about the young men and women involved in high school vocational agriculture programs. As a high school teacher and counselor, I have witnessed firsthand what vocational agriculture has done to mold outstanding young citizens.

Your recent articles concerning cutbacks and cancellation of agricultural programs caused me to write and express my concern. Schools need to realize that vocational education is as important as any other part of the high school curriculum.

I never had the opportunity to be a member of a vocational agriculture program, but one of the greatest honors I have received was to be made an Honorary Chapter Farmer.

Roger Frasure
Lancaster, Ohio

Good Advice

I am writing concerning the article about the vo-ag department being closed in Grove, Illinois.

My vo-ag department is in a school in the middle of a city. Most of the teachers and board members do not see a real need for this program in our school.

Last year around this time the board was thinking of cutting our chapter in half, which meant losing one ag teacher. None of us could stand the thought of losing either of our teachers so we wrote letters and went to the board meetings. The response was so overwhelming that they did not cut our chapter. I think we made our teachers and board members realize how valuable our ag program is to the students and to the community. Anything of real value is worth fighting for.

Kami Johnson
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Greenhand Request

I am a Greenhand FFA member. I would like to see more information on parliamentary procedure contests throughout the U.S. I was on a recently successful parliamentary procedure team.

Nasser Dean
Willows, California

New Friends

I am a second-year FFA member. One of the things I have received since participating in FFA is the chance to meet people and make new friends. I feel this is one of the most beneficial things that we receive from our organization.

Bridgett Ellis
Red Lodge, Montana

Favorite Page

I have enjoyed the magazine for the last three years and I look forward to keep on getting it because I have enjoyed many articles. I also like the Joke Page, it is the best.

Billy Joe Stephenson
Stephensport, Kentucky

Joke Contributor

I enjoy the magazine and the fine articles. It's nice to see my name published and I get a chuckle out of the Joke Page.

Bobbie Mae Cooley
Bowen, Illinois

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to: MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

Trends in Agriculture

Looking Ahead

One For The Price of Two

A bill before the U.S. House which gives clear title to buyers of agricultural commodities is gaining momentum. The bill before the House, H.R. 1591, removes the farm products exceptions from the Uniform Commercial Code, giving commodity buyers clear title and allows lenders to protect themselves by simply notifying buyers of existing liens. Currently, a farmer could pay for a load of corn and have to pay for it a second time if the person who sold the corn had not repaid his bank loan.

Meat Boycott Ineffective

The great American Meatout on March 20 has come and gone and so far it seems to have had little impact. The Meatout was organized by the Farm Animal Reform Movement which wanted Americans to boycott meat for one day. The hope was that consumers, after giving up meat for one day, would find it easier to cut back on meat consumption, or cut it out entirely.

Federal Crop Insurance To Change

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation is proposing to phase out its direct insurance sales and to provide crop insurance solely through commercial reinsured companies. Under this proposal, FCIC would be restructured to more closely resemble a commercial reinsurance company. Under the proposal, FCIC would continue to set and/or approve rates and coverage, provide program direction and maintain oversight of reinsured companies.

Victory For U.S. Pork Producers

U.S. pork producers recently won a major victory in their year-long struggle to get countervailing duties imposed on Canadian hog and pork product imports. In 1984, live hog imports from Canada had jumped 195 percent. The U.S. Commerce Department had determined that so-called deficiency payments by the Canadian government to Canadian pork producers were, in fact, subsidies.

Windstorms Remove Plant Cells

A wind tunnel in Manhattan, Kansas, is providing new evidence that cells of young plants—as well as the soil—are literally torn away in windstorms that sweep across the Great Plains farmland. Tests confirm that windblown soil causes the loss of cells and other damage to plants and reduces yields. After a windstorm, less leaf area is left to capture sunlight and photosynthesize sugars for nourishment, thus forcing plants to divert energy to replace tissue losses, delaying and reducing growth.

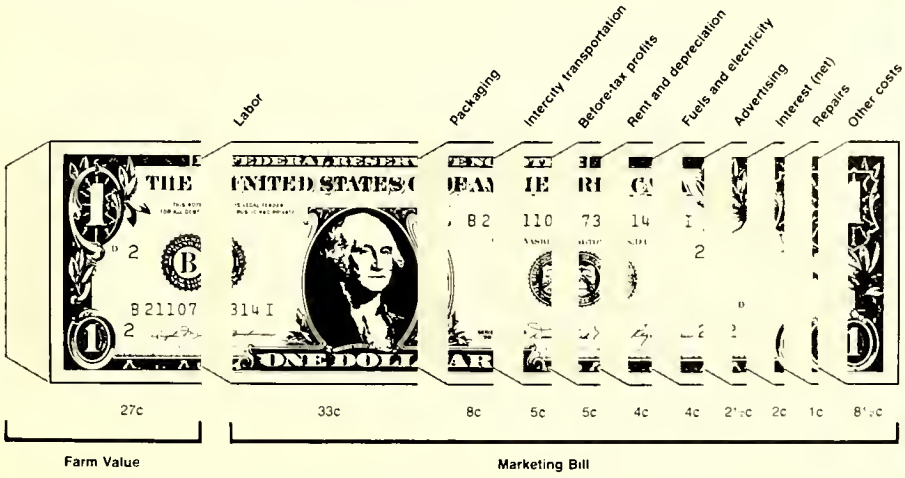
Brighter Future For Lamb and Wool

Demand for lamb and wool is on the increase. Rocco Enterprises, an Eastern lamb processor, plans to open a lamb packing plant in Virginia that will slaughter 500,000 lambs a year.

Increased Labor Costs

Higher labor costs add most to the food marketing bill. About $5.5 billion of the $12.5 billion increase it cost to market food in 1984 was attributed to labor. Packaging materials and food containers added another $2 billion.

What a Dollar Spent on Food Paid for in 1984



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Cabool Gets New Ag Building

Loaded with enthusiasm, this community accomplished a nearly impossible task that has been called "community service at its best."

By Karen Coble

MANY communities support their local vocational agriculture department. But the people of Cabool, Missouri, believe in vo-ag and FFA so strongly they gave their school a $200,000 building free of charge.

Last August, the 60 Cabool students moved into their new shop and remodeled classroom that was completely paid for and constructed by members of their rural southern Missouri community.

In May of 1983, Cabool's vo-ag/FFA program was reviewed by a group of local citizens who serve as the advisory committee to the department. "One of the most glaring problems was a lack of space," says committee chairman Joe Ben Whetstine. Students were using the same facilities that Whetstine had used when he took vo-ag courses in 1956.

The group knew the school budget simply could not be stretched enough to pay for a new building and five years earlier taxpayers in the school district had rejected a bond issue that would have provided funds to replace the overcrowded facilities.

But like David against Goliath, seemingly overwhelming odds did not stop this group. Committee members talked with their friends and neighbors and decided they had support to build. Loaded with enthusiasm and a promise of $10,000 from a local bank, they went before the school board for permission to construct a new vo-ag shop alongside an existing classroom. The school board accepted the offer, so the group took off on the project that has been called "an example of community service at its best."

Support came from all directions, in the community where FFA plaques are hung prominently on the walls of many homes and businesses. Agriculture is the lifeblood of this area and town of 2,000 people.

The vo-ag advisory committee and Cabool FFA members worked with other community leaders to raise money in almost every imaginable way. They hosted a Farm Feast where more than 800 people paid $5 a plate to help the building fund. The local Chamber of Commerce organized a sale where an FFA member served as auctioneer for everything from a furnace to an outhouse. A theatrical group, gospel organization and a restaurant organized fundraisers and everyone seemed to buy raffle tickets from FFA members. More than $30,000 was given in cash donations almost before the ground was broken for the building.

Four months after the idea was sparked for a community-built vo-ag complex, the people of Cabool began construction of the 50-foot by 80-foot shop with connecting storage and furnace rooms. Cabool Advisor Terry Brown had worked with volunteers and authorities to design a tailor-made facility for the school.

Local people were as energetic about the actual construction as they were in raising money for the project. Area building contractors and volunteer crews had the building frame standing within days of the concrete setting. Farmers pitched in with their carpentry skills alongside football coaches and businessmen. Local women kept the work crews fed and did the men's chores at home to aid the project. One former FFA member held a full-time job during the day so he nailed shingles on the shop at night with the light from a lantern.

Almost one year to the day after the ground was broken, the construction was finished with nearly 100 percent donated labor and materials. A local bank assessed that the volunteers saved the school district more than $200,000 in labor, materials and interest charges. The group even had money left, which they hope to use to buy new equipment for the department.

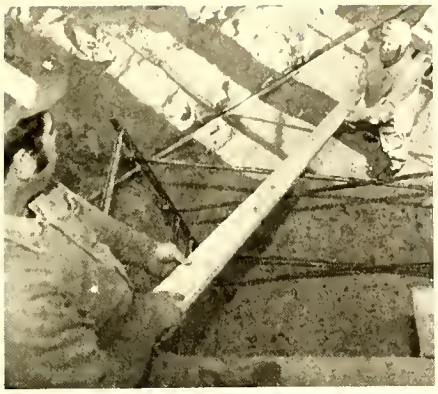
The volunteer efforts seem even more impressive when one considers the financial difficulties many in the community were suffering at the same time as they were giving so much. "They built this thing when economics here were as bad as they have been lately," says Mr. Brown.

Local residents believe a new vo-ag building was worth their hard work. "We recognize the fact that agriculture is the major industry in our community and if we don't prepare our kids for this kind of activity in this community they aren't going to get it anywhere else," says Mr. Whetstine.

The Cabool students describe their new facilities as nothing less than wonderful. The larger shop and classroom is

The community gave the school this new vo-ag building completely free.

Photos by Fred Krizan



The community donated nearly 100 percent of the labor and materials.

expanding students' opportunities especially for agricultural mechanics projects. More students can work simultaneously on projects in the shop. "There is more efficient use of student and instructor time because of the ease of movement in this shop," Mr. Brown says.

Cabool's FFA advisor also believes the new facilities will allow their vo-ag department to increase their curriculum and opens the door to expansion to a two-teacher program.

However, this community project provided more than just a bigger and nicer classroom and shop for students. Joey Bass, 17-year-old Cabool chapter president says, "The whole project gave me leadership training and a better understanding of people."

FFA member Teresa Beck says the members have a greater pride in the department and the people of the community because of the project.

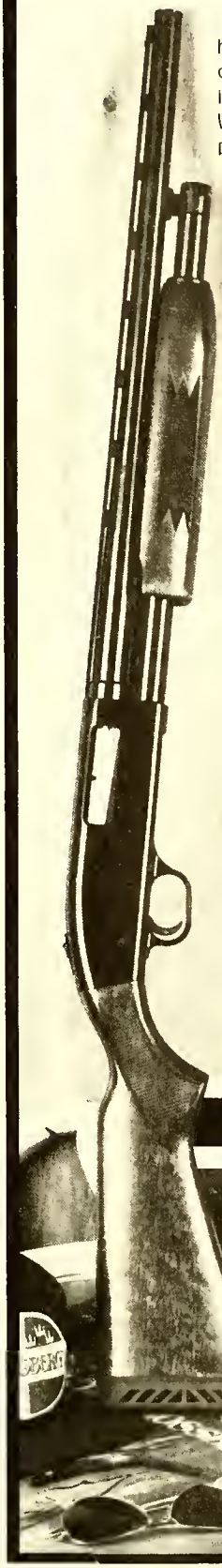
Local people have drawn closer to the department through their work. Mr. Brown says, "The project has made me more aware of resource persons to go to for aid in instructional programs."

Their common goal has drawn many area people together as well. Director of the Cabool Chamber of Commerce John Ayer says, "People who have lived here all their lives will tell you the town has never been this close before. It absolutely electrified the town."

The people of Cabool's spirit have received much attention from others too. Their volunteerism was featured on the nationally televised McNeil-Lehrer Report, in many newspapers and radio programs. They received a letter of commendaton from President Ronald Reagan.

All of this community support has caused one minor problem for the Cabool FFA Chapter, which awards outstanding supporters with a certificate of appreciation at their annual banquet. This year, there are simply too many people to thank them individually at the banquet. They hope to solve the problem by honoring all the vo-ag building contributors on one big plaque. •••

SKILL BUILDER — The way to taking your best shot!



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The Petal Pusher

Customers are urged to beat a path to Sloan's for their flower needs.

By John Dutcher

Photos by Author

Tracy learned mostly greenhouse work in vo-ag.

ONE FFA member who's helping spruce up homes and gardens in her corner of New Jersey is Tracy Sloan Hitchner, 19, of Bridgeton. Tracy is the 1984 eastern region Floriculture proficiency award winner.

Tracy pushes house plants, cut flowers and bedding plants like a makeup counter pushes beauty products — to make the pretty prettier and the plain less plain.

Tracy is a partner in Sloan's Flower Shop and Greenhouses, a family business her grandmother started in 1928. She reminds Bridgeton residents of those facts each week on the radio, as she encourages them to beat a path to Sloan's for all their flower needs.

"We used to have the man on the radio do our advertisements for us," says Tracy. "I started doing them about three years ago to make them seem a little bit more personal."

She records the one-minute ads as the seasons and holidays change. Tracy uses ads to promote everything from summer sales on bedding plants to prodding area businessmen to buy flowers for Secretary's Day.

Tracy says her personal approach to advertising really pays off. "I'm sort of known for the way I say hello," Tracy laughs. "People always tell me, 'I just love to hear you in the morning, it perks me up so well.'"

Besides area residents, Tracy has found the radio is a good way to pull in business from people headed to their summer houses at the beach. Tracy's shop and greenhouses are conveniently located on Route 49, a main highway that leads to the Jersey Shore of sandy beaches and gambling casinos.

"A lot of people like to get an early start on the way to their beach-front property. They'll hear the ads and look for the shop along the way," says Tracy. "Most people like to pick up a few geraniums and bedding plants to brighten up their doorsteps at the beach."

A Florist's Knack

In addition to her green thumb with plants, Tracy also has a "knack" for floral design.

"You either have a knack for arranging flowers or you don't," says Tracy. "I don't know if I was born with it or it's just something I picked up watching my dad and grandmother arrange flowers."

Tracy attributes a lot of her success to having the facilities to practice and a father and grandmother who were willing to teach. "Dad really pushed me to learn as much as I could," Tracy says. "I needed that."

The horticulture program at the Cumberland Regional High School vo-ag department was geared more toward greenhouse operation than floriculture when Tracy was in school. So Tracy learned to hone her design skills by teaching the chapter's floriculture team how to place flowers in vases and get floral designs.

"Floriculture is more imagination than anything else," says Tracy. "You have to be able to look at a vase and see the flowers all ready in it, to know where to place them. That's the hardest thing to try to teach someone."

Since there's keen competition for funeral flower work in Bridgeton, Tracy asked the funeral directors how her work compared with that of other florists who *have* attended floral design schools. "They told me as long as I watched the trends and kept current with my designs, I wouldn't have to worry about being edged out of the funeral trade," Tracy adds.

Tracy knows getting edged out of a market as *healthy* as the funeral flower business could be rough on the shop. "To tell the truth, the economy has been so bad around here that not too many people have been sending flowers unless they have to," Tracy admits.

Since she has an unsavory economy to deal with, Tracy has to make sure her plants and floral designs are as healthy and fresh as possible. "When someone sends flowers, two people end up seeing them; the person who received them and the person who sends them," says Tracy. "If the flowers aren't fresh, we've lost two customers."

"We have to like the plant or arrangement before we'll deliver it," says Tracy. "It's got our name on it." Tracy puts

(Continued on Page 33)

Tracy makes sure her plants and floral designs are healthy and fresh.

"HOW I MADE $18,000 FOR COLLEGE BY WORKING WEEKENDS."

When my friends and I graduated from high school, we all took part-time jobs to pay for college.

They ended up in car washes and hamburger joints, putting in long hours for little pay.

Not me. My job takes just one weekend a month and two weeks a year. Yet, I'm earning $18,000 for college.

Because I joined my local Army National Guard.

They're the people who help our state during emergencies like hurricanes and floods. They're also an important part of our country's military defense.

So, since I'm helping them do such an important job, they're helping me make it through school.

As soon as I finished Advanced Training, the Guard gave me a cash bonus of $2,000. Then, under the New GI Bill, I'm getting another $5,000 for tuition and books.

Not to mention my monthly Army Guard paychecks. They'll add up to more than $11,000 over the six years I'm in the Guard.

And if I take out a college loan, the Guard will help me pay it back—up to $1,500 a year, plus interest.

It all adds up to $18,000—or more—for college for just a little of my time. And that's a heck of a better deal than any car wash will give you.

THE GUARD CAN HELP PUT YOU THROUGH COLLEGE, TOO. SEE YOUR LOCAL RECRUITER FOR DETAILS, CALL TOLL-FREE 800-638-7600,* OR MAIL THIS COUPON.

*In Hawaii, 737-5255, Puerto Rico: 721-4550, Guam: 477-9957, Virgin Islands (St. Croix), 773-6438, New Jersey: 800-452-5794. In Alaska, consult your local phone directory.

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Americans At Their Best.

Rex Wichert, Star Agribusinessman of America

Photos by Bill Stagg

Meet the Star Agribusinessmen who've travelled...

The Demanding Road To Stardom

By Bill Kelsey

Mike Fuhler, Central Region Star Agribusinessman

SOMEWHERE there are eight vo-ag students who will proudly take their places on the stage at the National FFA Convention for the exciting Stars Over America pageant four of them will be regional Star Farmers; four will represent their regions as Star Agribusinessmen.

What does it take to travel the demanding road to Stardom? How do you get that far and what secret formula is there for success in achieving such high honors?

To find some of the answers, meet four who reached those heights in 1984. The four regional Star Agribusinessmen share their thoughts, their experiences, their ideas and their ideals to encourage you to do just what they did, and Reach for the Stars!

You'll Never Fail Until You Fail To Try

A sophomore sat in the packed Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City. The house lights dimmed, the stage flooded with light, the Stars Over America pageant began . . .

The sophomore, from Fairview, Oklahoma, was caught up in the excitement. Soon he began to dream . . . In November, 1984 that dream came true for Rex Wichert who was honored as FFA's national Star Agribusinessman.

Rex's SOE program began with a few head of livestock and 20 acres of crops. By the time he stood in the spotlight and acknowledged the cheers of the convention audience, he had 85 beef cattle, was farming 107 acres of wheat and grassland, and operating a lucrative custom hay-baling business.

Part-time work as an electrician, as an agricultural mechanic and as a farm hired hand, together with his SOE income, enabled him to invest in additional equipment and expand his custom business with a hay swather, a large round baler and a square baler, which he transported from job to job with his own truck and trailer, which he built himself while enrolled in vocational agriculture.

Today he is studying agronomy at Oklahoma State University. His ambition is to run a crop consulting business, with an emphasis on crop research. This is an interest that developed through his FFA project with hay swathing and baling, when farmers sought his opinion and advice on such questions as what chemicals they should use.

What does it take to be a Star? Says Rex: "It takes a lot of hard work and determination never to give up once you have set your goals. You are going to have your troubles and disappointments — but you can't let that stop you. I was really discouraged quite a few times. My first year with this project was really bad — I'd never been exposed to anything like that. It was a real learning experience, and I had a lot of trouble — dealing with some of the farmers, collecting bills, equipment problems, and just learning the ropes of the trade. I was almost to the point of giving up, but then I decided I had to keep going and it turned 'round and became a success."

Rex learned many things from his FFA membership, he says, but the most important of all was an ability to relate to other people. He gives this advice to those just beginning their FFA careers: "Set your goals high, work hard to achieve them — and remember one thing: Keep on trying...you can never really fail until you fail to try again."

Mark Anderson, Eastern Region Star Agribusinessman

Carolyn Martin, Southern Region Star Agribusinessman

Accomplish As Much As You Can

When Mike Fuhler's vo-ag teacher and chapter advisor persuaded him to compete in a farm management contest in his sophomore year, the 1984 central region Star accepted it as a major challenge.

That was his first year in the Weselin FFA Chapter in Trenton, Illinois, and that success gave Mike a big boost. It also helped develop a philosophy that he passes on to young FFA'ers: "The most important thing is to accomplish as much as you can. I think that's what FFA is all about...it's an opportunity to see what you can accomplish, it's a chance to test yourself, to challenge yourself, to improve your personality and to build your confidence. So take the opportunity to be involved. If you don't, you'll never know how successful you could be."

Mike followed his own advice during his FFA years, and was successful at many things. "But," he says, "I've probably failed at just as many. The secret is, if you fail at something, sit down and try to figure out why you failed, and try to correct those things — if you need some more knowledge or experience, go get it. Then when you come back to try again you're likely to be more successful."

It was that farm management contest that sparked Mike's interest in the business side of agriculture and led him into the career that he follows today. In his senior year at high school he took the opportunity offered by a school job-training program to work part-time for the local cooperative. After graduation, he joined the cooperative full time and now has moved up from bookkeeper to

(Continued on Page 17)

Photos by Author

Highland Harvests Its Apples

FFA members at this chapter reap benefits from their annual apple harvest, in cash and experience

By Michael Wilson

TAKE a pleasure drive through Washington State's bountiful Yakima Valley some sunny fall day, and you're sure to see more vegetables and fruit crops harvested than you can count on two hands. You might also be startled to see several FFA members busy plucking handfuls of juicy red apples from some of Washington's finest apple trees. If you inquire about their motives, you'll likely discover they are members of the Highland FFA. And you'll soon learn that this isn't the first time these FFA members have gotten their hands into the trees.

FFA members from Highland, located near Cowiche, Washington, have taken part in their own annual apple harvest for over 25 years now. Last year the chapter grossed $14,000 for the chapter treasury, according to Gary Slagg, Highland advisor. But the dollars only tell half the story.

"Eighty-five percent of the community industry is in agriculture," says Slagg, who has taught at the school for 11 years. "Of that, 75 percent is apple harvesting. You can see how important apples are to this area."

Administrators at the school recognize the mighty apple's importance. Each fall students at Highland are allowed to leave school to help with the harvest. "Most all my ag students have jobs lined up months before," says Slagg. "The experience they get in fruit tree management is invaluable."

Highland's FFA farm is made up of eight acres of hay, plus a six-acre apple orchard donated by Marley Orchards, a large apple harvesting corporation. The company donated the acreage because it liked the kind of training provided by the local FFA chapter. Many students get jobs with companies like Marley after they graduate, or work part-time while still in school, Slagg says.

Perhaps the most satisfying thing about the chapter's apple harvesting activities is the fact that students get to try things for themselves. The chapter owns its own fertilizer spreader, sprayer, mower and disk. They haul their equipment with a trailer built in shop class. The chapter handles its own labor and management. "We have to worry about disease, frost, hail and when's the best time to harvest, just like commercial growers," says Slagg. The apples, most of which are Red Delicious, Red Rome and Golden Delicious, are sold to Marley after the harvest each fall. "Since the community is so involved, it's great that we can provide this kind of experience," Slagg adds.

Meanwhile, Highland FFA members are preparing for another fall apple harvest. If you see them crawling and climbing through the trees you'll know who it is. •••

Above, Highland FFA members up to their apples in apples. Below, Advisor Gary Slagg supervises the harvest.

Star Agribusinessmen

(Continued from Page 15)

office manager and fertilizer specialist, has developed a perpetual inventory system and helped establish a computerized record keeping system.

And, while working full time at the cooperative, Mike has not neglected his further education, enrolling in home study courses and classes at the area college and the Farmland training school.

Mike's ambition is to be manager of a local cooperative within ten years. That's one of the goals he has set for himself. And on the subject of goals, Mike has some definite ideas: "When you are setting your goals, you have got to extend and challenge yourself," he urges. "There has to be some risk involved, otherwise you are not going to accomplish to your full ability. But you also have to look at it realistically...you don't want to set those goals so high that it's going to be impossible to reach them."

That was how Mike trod the path to the stage in Kansas City—one step at a time. He explains: "The only thing I set out to do was get my American Farmer degree. Then I got to thinking: Wouldn't it be nice to be a state winner! And after that happened, I got to thinking about the regional competition: It sure would be nice if..."

And it sure was.

Never Do Anything Just Halfway

Carolyn Martin made history at the 1984 National FFA Convention. She was the first female ever in the 56-year history of FFA to appear on the stage as a regional Star Agribusinessman.

Carolyn earned her place as the southern region agribusiness Star after many hours of hard work raising tobacco and sharpening blades at the family's sawmill at Baxter, Tennessee. She began working at the sawmill as a freshman in vocational agriculture and used that project as part of her SOE program, along with raising three acres of tobacco and two calves. Her SOE program grew to the point at which she was raising 12 acres of tobacco and working 36 hours a week at the sawmill.

Today, her life is still filled with hard work. As a student of agricultural engineering at Tennessee Technological University, she has arranged her classes so that she works three mornings and two afternoons at the sawmill during the week—and then another eight-to-ten hours on Saturday.

Her work can consist of just about any job around the sawmill that any of the men can handle. Carolyn unloads logs, measures logs and de-barks logs. "Around here you never know what job you're going to be doing. Depends on what the day's like, what the job's going to be," Carolyn explains.

She will graduate from Tennessee Tech in March. "Right now we're building a new sawmill—and that's going to be a pretty good size." She hopes that one day she and her brother will be in partnership, running that sawmill.

When she started working in the sawmill she had no thoughts of anything like becoming a Star Agribusinessman. "I just wanted to get my American Farmer degree," she says. "Then I won it for Tennessee—that really surprised me; when I went on to get it for the southern region, I couldn't believe it!"

Carolyn thanks FFA for teaching her leadership skills, and to be more responsible. "It helped me grow up a lot and helped me communicate with people better—I used to be real shy."

Carolyn's advice to Greenhands? "Get in there and do your best. Never do anything just halfway and you might be surprised, like I was, in accomplishing a lot more than you set out to accomplish."

They were selected as regional winners from 700 recipients of the American Farmer Degree.

Take School Seriously

It was Mark Anderson's first National FFA Convention. He stood in the wings as the excitement mounted, as everyone waited for the Stars Over America pageant to begin.

"I just couldn't wait for the results," says Mark, the eastern region's Star Agribusinessman of 1984. But he knew that, whatever happened, he would be happy with the outcome. It was a great moment in his life—to have come all that way and to appear as a regional Star was just great!

Mark literally began from the ground up when he started sweeping floors in his family's fledgling fertilizer business in New Berlin, Pennsylvania. He worked after school and during summers to save money to buy stock in the company as part of his SOE program in vocational agriculture. Today, as part owner and manager of the company, his responsibilities have expanded to overseeing manufacture of flotation equipment, spraying equipment and the custom manufacture of fertilizer equipment. In addition, Mark heads the two-man sales force, and also does all the buying for the firm.

After graduation from high school, Mark went off to Delaware Valley College, but after one semester decided to return to the growing family business. He realizes the importance of keeping up with developing and changing technologies and continues his education by attending many trade meetings and workshops across the country.

What does it take to be a Star Agribusinessman? "You've got to start yourself in some sort of business and you've got to be willing to invest a lot of time and money in it. I worked for my father since I was about seven and started investing money when I was about 12. I've kept on investing in the business ever since—now I own about 20 percent."

To those who want to follow his example, Mark has this advice: "Take school more seriously than most people do. Find a job at a young age, and try to put some money together. Decide on something that you like to do and then, when you get out of school, make your investment and work hard at it."

Mark works hard and long, partly because he enjoys what he does, particularly the involvement with other people, for which FFA helped train him, but also because he has an ambition... "I'm going to go flat out between now and age 50. That's when I plan to retire, put my feet up and live a life of ease."

After visiting with this energetic and extremely busy young businessman, however, we will be very surprised if ever he does "put his feet up." •••

FFA Degree Recognition

American Farmer Degree Recognition

The Greenhand degree is earned after an FFA member shows an understanding of FFA and its history. You must also develop a satisfactory SOE program through vocational agriculture class.

After you have improved your SOE program and leadership skills, you can advance to the Chapter Farmer degree and then on to the State Farmer degree.

After you have received your State Farmer degree, you can apply for the American Farmer degree. The American Farmer degree is one of FFA's highest honors.

Sponsored by: J I Case, a Tenneco Company; Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.; The nation's Production Credit Associations; The nation's Federal Land Banks; NA-CHURS Plant Food Company; Cyanamid Agricultural Division.

FFA Stars Program

A Star Greenhand, Chapter Farmer and Agribusinessman are selected annually at the chapter level for excellence in SOE programs, leadership and FFA involvement.

Your state selects a Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman from State Farmer degree recipients.

Stars at the regional and national levels are selected from American Farmer degree recipients from across the nation. The Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman receive a $2,000 check and an opportunity to represent FFA at many vocational agriculture functions.

Sponsored on the local and state level by Federal Crop Insurance Corporation. Sponsored on the national level by Executive Sponsors of the National FFA Foundation. National Stars Over America audio-visual sponsored by Levi Strauss & Company.

Photo by Author

National officers met with Ambassador Mike Mansfield at the American Embassy in Tokyo during their international experience program in February. Mr. E. Uyeno and Mr. G. Nakayama, representing FFA's host, Mitsui & Company, joined the group for the briefing.

National Officers Tour Japan

A visit with the best customer for U.S. agricultural products proves to be a rewarding experience for FFA officers

By Lennie Gamage

JAPAN. It's not all temples and shrines. Or shoguns and samurais. That's what your National FFA Officers observed in February during their annual "international experience" program sponsored by Mitsui & Company. Japan is a modern and fast moving society. And it's America's single best customer for our agricultural products.

That's one of the reasons FFA officers are so excited about and interested in Japan. The importance of this USA-Japan relationship was underscored by Ambassador Mike Mansfield at the embassy during a special briefing session arranged for them by the Foreign Agriculture Service and U.S. Information Agency.

The Future Farmers of Japan gave a warm welcome to the FFA officers during their visit.

Steve Meredith with his host family. Visiting in the Japanese home was a trip highlight.

Photos by Glenn Luedke

"Ambassador Mansfield told us that in 1983 Japan purchased $6.2 billion in U.S. ag commodities," reported Steve Meredith, national president. "He asked us also to be aware that on some products we had reached a near maximum level and could not expect the Japanese to purchase more."

"Mr. James Grueff of the Foreign Agriculture Service explained that USDA has a staff of seven ag specialists promoting our products," continued Steve, "which is USDA's largest overseas office. We learned that the Japanese farmer still has a great deal of political power, with his single vote having as much power as six city dwellers! Maybe that helps explain their concern over Japan's lack of self-sufficiency in food production."

Later in the week, the national officers were shown the port facilities for receiving American corn and wheat at Nagoya, Japan; and several companies nearby that processed raw products into flour, feedstuff and oil. "It was hard to realize that at this one site, more than 600,000 tons of our corn was imported and processed," commented Nanci Mason, "and that most of it traveled down the Mississippi River and through Mitsui's own elevator not very far from my home."

But imports, exports and trade discussions weren't everything that the officers experienced. "Those bullet trains were clean, on time, and very fast," observed Michael Gayaldo, "with average speed of 130 miles per hour and a top of 170."

"On the bullet train back to Tokyo we had a great view of Mt. Fugi," reported Mike Barrett, "and there was lots of time for just observing the people, doing some sightseeing and shopping.

"One of the things that impressed me most when we visited the Mitsui headquarters overlooking the Imperial Palace grounds," Mike continued, "was the friendliness, the knowledge and commitment to their work of the people. They even provided a reception for us and invited young members of their staff, many who were just out of the university."

On a side trip to China, the officers observed street scenes such as this central market.

Contact with the Future Farmers of Japan, their members and families, was a highlight of the trip. The first visit was to Tajima Agricultural High School in Hyogo Prefecture near the Sea of Japan. "We arrived at the school and were immediately greeted with applause," noted Brad Bass. "Then we were introduced to the custom of removing shoes before entering the school and having to put on slippers. We were greeted by the FFJ president and the principal of the school, then it was our turn to talk using our interpreter. We told about our homes, our families and the FFA. Then it was time to go to our host families."

"During the trip home, I made my first futile attempt at conversation," commented Steve. "I was introduced to members of the family, shown the home and learned to eat sukiyaki and rice Japanese style. A steaming hot bath, kimonos and a foot warmer at bedtime were other differences that I noted." Nanci's family exchanged gifts and shared family photos with each other, before the officers regrouped to return to Tokyo. "My host family was exemplary of the kindness and warmth the Japanese have for Americans," Nanci concluded.

It's not possible to visit Japan without being impressed with their modern manufacturing technology. State-of-the-art electronics and robotics were used in the Yanmar Company's Kinemoto plant. The officers observed Yanmar and John Deere tractors coming off the assembly line at the rate of 40,000 per year, all produced by only 360 employees. At another nearby plant, 800 workers produce small diesel engines with a total output of 5 million horsepower each year.

With the end of the tour approaching the national officers headed to Hong Kong for sightseeing and a very informative day spent in the People's Republic of China. Mike Barrett's first impression was "that the people lived a harder and less eventful life than that to which we were accustomed." Mike concluded, "It's safe to say that never before had the six of us felt more fortunate to have been born in America, than we did during that one day in China."

Steve Meredith, summing up the feelings of the officer group, said, "Our nine days in Japan was marked by much sightseeing, shopping and dining on new and different foods. But more importantly, we each gained a greater understanding of the Japanese people—their culture, lifestyle, cuisine, agriculture and industry. As we promoted the goodwill of American agriculture, we gained friends and developed a realization of the interdependence of world agriculture."

FFA's National Officers have paved the way in 1985 for more cultural and educational exchanges. In July, a group of 20 FFA members, including some state FFA officers, will leave for Tokyo and two weeks of Japanese language training and ten weeks with farm and horticultural host families. At the same time, two groups of FFJ members will experience short host family visits in Virginia and Wisconsin. •••

FFA Group Tours U.S.

THE National FFA Officers traveled throughout the United States in February to learn about American business and industry. The two FFA "Stars"—Star Farmer and Agribusinessman—accompanied the six officers and others in the FFA group visiting 21 cities in ten states. Approximately 150 businesses and industries along the East and West Coast as well as in the Central United States were visited by the officers and stars to learn about the structure of the U.S. economic system.

Kansas City, Missouri, was the starting point for the two-week tour. The group met with Carl Gerhardt, senior vice president of Alfa-Laval, Inc., AgriGroup. Gerhardt is also the chairman for the 1985 National FFA Foundation Sponsoring Committee. From there, the group divided into three teams and covered California, Utah, Colorado, Ohio, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Missouri and Tennessee.

"The U.S. tour gave us the chance to visit with many businesses and communities that support vocational agriculture and FFA," commented Steve Meredith, national FFA president from Glendale, Kentucky. He added, "It is our chance to learn about their work and service as well as an opportunity to express our appreciation to them and explain our current activities."

The U.S. tour follows the officers' return from a visit to Japan, Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China. •••

Computers At The Pass

Students use terminals in the vo-ag classroom as a way to take notes and study lessons prepared by their instructor.

Just about every FFA member has been writing notes in class and looked up to discover the overhead transparency had been changed. You had to get your notes from your neighbor or ask the teacher to repeat. Most students would never ask.

Getting notes from a neighbor would lead to trouble for talking in class. If your vo-ag teacher is left-handed, you also know what it's like to wait for him to finish writing so you could see the overhead projector. For those of you who can write fast, you always had to wait for the others to catch up.

Fortunately now, most of these problems have been solved at White Pass FFA Chapter in Randle, Washington. They are using computers in their ag classroom.

First, you can copy your notes at your own speed. The writing is neatly typed out, properly spaced, and there may be pictures drawn on the computer about your lesson.

You can study your notes quite easily too, as each lesson is set up as an organized programmed learning activity. You read the question and then press enter on the computer for the answer.

Some of the programs are designed so the student must type in the correct answer. At the end of these test programs the grade is given for our teacher to record in his grade book. If you wish to try the test again, there is no penalty. Each of us had the fun of using a computer during our agriculture class.

White Pass has been using computers in the classroom since 1980. In 1979, Mr. Norman Sadler, agriculture teacher, wrote a vocational grant for six computers. The grant was approved and experiences with computers began.

Through Mr. Sadler's grants and the school district purchases, the classroom now has 28 TRS-80 16K computers which are usually loaded by two networking systems. The programs are loaded down to the 16K machines via two TRS-80 double disk, 48K, Model III computers which are centrally located. They also have a daisy wheel line printer and a telephone modem which is used to enter the AgriData Network.

When Mr. Sadler first started teaching he felt that programmed lessons worked best for him. All of his lesson plans were designed around the idea that a good question with a good answer would help to speed up learning and create good class discussions. Little did he realize that this was the very system which would work so well with computers. When the micro-computer age dawned in 1977, Mr. Sadler thought that he might be able to learn how to program these lessons on computers, and that is how it all began for our school. He felt that it would be possible to convert his lesson plans into computer programs that students could use on a more individualized basis.

According to Amanda Byrom, chapter president, "Computers are used by our chapter to store our minutes, to keep current rosters of our members, to maintain correspondence with other chapters, to keep our project diary of events, to sort names in alphabetical order, to type perfect letters, to spark classroom instruction and to obtain a world of agriculture information through the AgriData Network. Our computers have really opened up a new world for our chapter."

Each week Amanda gets on-line and obtains information on livestock and wheat futures and finds out the latest stock market quotes for the forest industry corporations. Each time we run the Network, the latest news items are listed for agriculture. We can also send mail to other chapters, find out what is happening with FFA News, obtain Lessons on agriculture economics, order items from our National FFA Supply Service, obtain weather news for any county in the U.S.A. and get software reviews.

In our classes we use programs using math to find out how to mix feeds using the Pearson Square method, or how to find the number of acres in a field, or how to determine the correct mix for making concrete. We use the computer to solve problems in house wiring. The computer is used to determine the correct number of amperes in an electrical wire. We can determine the correct number of trees to be planted per acre. In soils we use the computer to help determine the percentage of sand, silt and clay in our soil samples. Agriculture math is more fun with computers.

Other student member reactions are good. Kimberly Coleman offers, "I think that computers are better to use than chalkboards. They are easier to understand and if a student can't see the board, the class is easier to understand because they can see the computer. You learn about computers and agriculture at the same time. In our agriculture class we can get wheat prices on futures through a telephone hook-up.

Chris Sadler says, "I think computers help organize things. You can study your agriculture class tests on them. They help you write neat letters. You can store large quantities of information on computers. I think computers help expand our intelligence." •••

"Two days deep in no-man's land you don't want surprises with your ATV. Like finding out your Sampson of the showroom is really the Wimp of the woods.

"So be prepared, guys. Count on a 4-wheeler that's not going to crater on you. Like a new Bayou 185.

"Kawasaki's rugged pathfinder is up to any trek you're up to. And it's outfitted with lots of great outdoors features that'll put you in its camp to stay.

"Bayou climbs with the agility of a mountain goat. The strength of one, too.

"And check these items from Bayou's survival kit. Independent front suspension. Shaft drive. Five speeds. Reverse. And automatic clutch.

"If the Bayou 185 can get you there, it can get you back. So take a hike on down to your Kawasaki dealer and look 'em over.

"Your call of the wild should be 'Bayou!' Not 'Help!'"

Kawasaki
TAKING IT TO THE LIMIT

TAKING IT TO THE LIMIT.

"THE 4-WHEELER THAT TAKES YOU DOWN THE TRAIL SHOULDN'T LEAVE YOU UP THE CREEK."

—Catherine Bach

For off-road use only. Specifications subject to change without notice. Availability may be limited. Always wear a helmet and appropriate apparel. Protect the environment and obey laws and regulations that control the use of your ATV.

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For close to 170 years, Remington firearms have been known for outstanding quality and dependable performance. Now, owning one is even more affordable.

Our Sportsman® Series offers the same uncompromised American-made quality that hunters and shooters expect from Remington. At unexpectedly low prices.

The difference between these and the more expensive Remington guns is only in the degree of finish and details. While the "Sportsman" Series doesn't give you the fancy extra touches, it does give you the best basic guns for everything from cottontails to whitetails.

The fit, feel, and pointability are all there. Plus the reliable quality that makes your Remington a good value for generations to come.

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The Alligator Kids

It's a far cry from the typical FFA project, but alligator farming gives these two FFA members the same record keeping and management experience other members get from crops and cattle

WHEN Shane Brooks goes out to feed his livestock, he makes sure to watch his step. Shane and his brother Wayne daily feed over 4,000 tail-swinging, jaw-snapping alligators and crocodiles on a family-operated farm near Christmas, Florida.

Shane's father, Hermon Brooks, started the farm almost 20 years ago. Today it serves a dual purpose as a tourist attraction where visitors can see the reptiles in their natural setting; and

Top, Shane hangs onto a handful of baby gators recently hatched. Below, both brothers have used their experience in FFA projects. Left, feeding time.

By Michael Wilson

as a producing farm which grows alligators for meat and hides.

Both Shane, 19, and Wayne, 18, have used their work experience on the farm as FFA Supervised Occupational Experience programs. Shane wanted to apply for a proficiency award as a junior, but he worried how the judges would feel about the alligator farm. "I didn't really think I had a chance," he says. "I thought FFA was all judging cows and raising corn. Then my ag teacher (Fred Dietrich) said, 'Go ahead and apply in the wildlife area. That's what's good about FFA.'"

Shane applied and ended up winning the state Fish and Wildlife Management award. The next year he applied for the Outdoor Recreation award and again earned state honors. He hopes to earn his American Farmer degree in the future. Evidently, the judges recognized that Shane was getting management and record keeping skills in his experience, even if his "livestock" seemed unusual. Both Shane and Wayne take care of most management duties, from feeding the farm's alligators for production, to showing visitors around Gator Jungle, the farm's 20-acre park. They also take care of record keeping, eggs in incubation, hatching and breeding stock.

According to Shane, alligators grow better in warm, sunny weather. Under normal Florida conditions, a gator will grow to market size (six to seven feet) in three to four years. "We plan to convert some pens into hot houses," says Shane, "which will speed their growth quite a bit. We'll keep the water temperature in the middle 80s and they'll eat all the time– they grow twice as fast."

All alligators are fed ground or whole chickens, plus a variety of fish with vitamins every other day. In all, the gators eat over 4,000 pounds of feed each day. As long as the gators are fed, they remain even-tempered, says Shane. In warm weather, the gators show a 2 to 3 percent growth rate per day. The "display" animals (those used in the Gator Jungle park) grow as long as 14 feet.

Once the alligators for production reach the right size, the Brooks skin each animal themselves in their own processing plant. Skinning valuable alligator hide requires a skillful touch. "If you accidentally cut a hole in the hide pattern, they knock 25 percent off the price," says Shane. Gator hide is sold by the belly inch, bringing about $150 to $200 per hide. Every inch of the hide is used to make purses, belts, watch bands or briefcases.

The Brooks get another $8 to $10 per pound for meat, generating $150 to $200 per carcass. Popularity of alligator meat is rapidly growing, especially in Florida. "They're just now starting to sell it in restaurants around here," says Shane. "Our family eats it regularly."

Wild Gators

Both boys have also worked with the Florida fish and game commission to collect eggs from wild gator nests. These eggs will be sold to farmers who want to start raising gators. These trips have provided the boys with some interesting adventures. "Collecting eggs from a nest that is protected by an eight-foot female alligator is not easy," understates Shane. "They'll come after you. Sometimes we have to throw a rope around their neck and tie 'em to a tree."

Gators have other unusual qualities. They can spend up to eight hours completely underwater, their jaw pressure is enough to break a shell around a turtle; and a sudden swing of the tail will knock you senseless. Shane was bitten in the foot once, but he says it's just one of the risks of the business. "There's a mean one in every tank," he explains.

The gators that wander free on the waters and beaches of Gator Jungle seem more sedate. The 20-acre park was completely landscaped by the Brooks family, and is surrounded by a six-foot chain link fence. It also features raccoons, otters, deer and panthers, but the main attractions are what keeps visitors enthralled. The Brooks spend little in advertising, yet attract 20,000-25,000 tourists to the park each year. Both brothers enjoy showing off the gators as much as tourists like seeing them. "Most people say they've never seen so many alligators in all their lives," says Wayne.

Both brothers enjoy their work and plan to stay involved in the business. They participated as officers and in judging contests as FFA members in the Orlando Chapter at nearby Colonial High School. But the home "farm" always kept them busy. "We've been involved since we were small kids," says Wayne. "Now we do everything – hauling feed, feeding, building fence."

A good reputation for quality breeding stock has helped the Brooks expand into the alligator breeding business. They've had several offers to sell brood stock and have worked with university officials towards developing artificial insemination techniques. That, and an expanding market for alligator meat, leads Shane to believe the future looks good.

"People want us to produce more and more," he says. "It's getting better every day."

That's great, Shane. Just watch your step. •••

An unusual "livestock" program for Shane and Wayne Brooks.

Flagler Beach Gets A Facelift

FFA members dig in: getting ready to "plant" discarded Christmas trees in the dunes, reducing erosion dramatically. *Photos by Author*

"Before each activity, we asked ourselves: 'Will this generate any dollars in the community? Will this generate any jobs in the future?"—GALVIN

By Michael Wilson

WHAT good is a seaside community without sandy beaches?

That's the question residents of Flagler Beach, Florida, pondered when coastal storms and erosion nearly wiped out 6.8 miles of this city's oceanfront beach and dune land.

Fortunately, Flagler Beach—a town dependent on beaches for tourist income—was rescued by the Bunnell FFA Chapter of nearby Flagler Palm Coast High School. Last year the chapter completed a massive four-year BOAC project that lifted city beaches from danger—and earned Bunnell the 1984 national BOAC title.

The chapter's project began after an FFA survey showed community concern over the eroding land. By the time the project ended FFA members had spent over 20,000 man-hours revegetating 6.8 miles of dunes, developing parks, replanting thousands of trees and in general, making Flagler Beach a lot nicer place to live, work and visit.

"The first thing we had to do was find out where the needs were worst," says Bunnell Advisor Jim Galvin, who spearheaded the long-range community development effort. "Our survey showed we would lose one of the biggest revenues in tourism if we lost that beach."

After mapping a plan and coordinating with city officials, the Bunnell Chapter sprang to action. FFA members helped grow 500,000 salt-tolerant plants, then planted them on dunes to control erosion. A thousand discarded Christmas trees were collected and buried in the worst areas, effectively cutting erosion by 95 percent.

Some students put their construction skills to work by designing and building 39 wooden walkovers. These were strategically placed between the beach access road and the beach itself, so that visitors would not step on new vegetation. Over 100 trash receptacles and park benches were built and installed along the city shores as well.

These initial projects took over two years to plan, complete and evaluate. "After another survey, we discovered we weren't finished," Mr. Galvin says. The chapter was next called on to clear land for two five-acre parks, establish grass, install park benches, sidewalks and assemble playground equipment with help from a federal grant. The chapter also landscaped a senior citizen's community center, and after a tremendous wildfire destroyed ten acres of productive coastal timberland, members replanted over 6,000 pine trees by hand.

By the time the chapter's entire BOAC program had reached its end, students who were Greenhands at the beginning were ready to graduate. Besides making Flagler Beach a better place to live, the chapter had contributed to the county's economic well-being, saving thousands of tax dollars and costs for maintenance.

In all, it was quite an achievement for an FFA chapter with fewer than 60 members on its roster.

Steps to Success

Why did Bunnell win the national BOAC award? Advisor Galvin says that with the right attitude, any chapter can achieve national recognition. But it takes planning, promotion, hard work and community support. "We spent a lot of time listening to what citizens wanted," he says. To do this, Bunnell FFA'ers conducted door-to-door surveys and sent out direct mail questionnaires.

Key individuals played a big role in

Bunnell FFA Advisor Jim Galvin is proud of his chapter's accomplishment in BOAC. Never one to rest on his laurels, he's got plans for a new BOAC project this year.

the project's success. Besides Mr. Galvin's leadership, many students sacrificed outside activities to help the chapter reach its goals. Gina Badger, chapter BOAC chairman, gave over 4,000 hours of her own time in the last four years, organizing crews, conducting workshops and giving over 500 speeches to promote the project. Volunteers from school and civic groups often helped out on the beach while the Bunnell FFA Alumni provided money, transportation, lunches and "hot cocoa on cold days," says Mr. Galvin.

After seeing so many groups contribute to the cause, the FFA advisor was convinced of the project's value to the community.

"In my opinion, a good BOAC project means more than taking gallons of paint and painting up the town," he says. "It means economic development. Before each activity, we asked ourselves: 'Will this generate any dollars in the community. Will this generate any jobs?'"

To build more support, Bunnell FFA members publicized their activities in television, radio and magazine announcements. They organized and sponsored an annual town celebration called "Day of the Coast," created posters and attended civic club and school assembly meetings. The publicity eventually reached the ears of the White House; President Reagan praised the chapter's BOAC project last summer in a meeting with FFA state presidents. Florida Governor Bob Graham honored the chapter with a governor's citation.

BOAC Ideas

Restoring coastland may not be possible or necessary in many communities, Mr. Galvin admits. But there are always improvement needs in every community. The trick is to recognize those needs. The Bunnell Chapter recently began work on its next BOAC project this time in response to the disastrous freeze Florida growers suffered last winter.

"Last Christmas I saw people lose a half-million dollars in crops, just like that," Mr. Galvin says, snapping his fingers for emphasis. The natural disaster gave him an idea for a "freeze forecasting" network, which would warn winter vegetable and citrus farmers of falling temperatures.

"We're currently setting up small weather stations at students' houses across the county, which will form a network for weather information," he says. "This information will then be sent to our local meteorologist, who will broadcast it to growers." Although the project is still in its infancy, the FFA advisor hopes it too will bring economic good fortune to the community— or help prevent economic disaster in the future. •••

FFA members hard at work with the shovels, anchoring old Christmas trees into the dunes. One of several wooden dune walkovers can be seen in the background.

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Chapter Scoop

by Jack Pitzer

First action of the newly formed Alumni affiliate in *Audubon*, IA, was to establish a scholarship fund. Interest from the fund will be used for tuition of an FFA member attending college or other training.

N-N-N

Promotional plug in the *Omro*, WI, winter newsletter was "Think Thaw."

N-N-N

Turkey Run, IN, FFA members attended a Purdue Univeristy basketball game with the money they earned from FFA fruit sales.

N-N-N

Greenville, OH, FFA held their March meeting at a local bowling alley on a Sunday evening. They elected assistant officers and voted on an FFA queen to be named at the chapter banquet. They also decided to donate $25 to their Ohio FFA Foundation. After the brief meeting, members, parents and guests enjoyed a couple hours of bowling.

N-N-N

Ubly, MI, FFA made a donation toward the repair of the Statue of Liberty.

N-N-N

At the December chapter meeting of the *Mississinawa Valley*, OH, FFA, an unexpected guest was Santa Claus who gave presents to all the members who were good and attended regularly.

N-N-N

This news item was submitted via the Ag Ed Network to the editorial offices of the magazine. *Delta Junction*, AK, is expecting to visit with National FFA Vice President Brad Bass at their state convention in Alaska.

N-N-N

This item also came via the Ag Ed Network. In ND, the *Mohall* Chapter hosted an invitational crops judging contest for area schools. They invited a dozen chapters and about 100 members to rate six classes of grain—durum, barley, oats, flax and two classes of hard red spring wheat. Also members had to identify 15 crop and weed seeds plus 15 crop and weed plants.

N-N-N

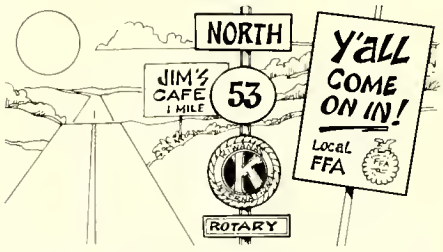
Plus here's another sample of an item submitted via the Network. The new chapter in *Morgantown*, WV, sold carnations during Valentine's Day to raise enough money to buy jackets for new members.

A "kiss the pig" contest during FFA Week was held by *Camas Valley*, OR, FFA. It's a contest to see which staff member gets to kiss a squealing pig in front of the student body.

N-N-N

An FFA Week activitiy conducted by the *School District 214-211* Chapter in IL is to help adults in a community hospital program make dish gardens.

N-N-N



The *Cottonwood*, AL, Chapter public relations project is adding two road signs on the highway entering town according to **Jimmy Dixon**, reporter.

N-N-N

The second annual covered dish dinner for parents and members of the *Belleville Henderson*, NY, Chapter included a pig raffle and free movies.

N-N-N

The *Perry*, MI, Chapter served a chili dinner to the staff of their school in appreciation for their cooperation whenever members need to be away from classes for FFA activities.

N-N-N

One of the *Glencoe*, OK, Chapter activities during FFA Week was to have **Dale Murphy**, chapter president, and **Paula Stout**, reporter, appear on an Oklahoma City television station.

N-N-N

Cheyenne, WY, FFA handed out blue and gold carnations to school faculty during FFA Week.

N-N-N

Keith Sykes, chapter historian for *Southampton*, VA, Chapter is also football captain.

N-N-N

The *Cherrydale*, KS, FFA held its first annual cow chip throwing contest during FFA Week. Greenhand **Steven Housel** threw the prestigious patty a record-setting 162 feet.

N-N-N

In order to increase attendance at local chapter meetings, the *Cottonwood*, MN, FFA rented video movies and showed them on the school's VCR after the chapter meeting. This idea from reporter and recreation chairman **Jonathan Olson**.

N-N-N

Garretson, SD, FFA hosted three night classes dealing with farm safety topics—farm stress and the economy, CPR, and first aid care.

Tashia Sizemore of the *Alexander*, OH, Chapter does a radio program called "Down on the Farm with the Alexander FFA" four times each week.

N-N-N

Mindy Ferguson has taken a leave of absence from her *North Mahaska* Chapter in New Sharon, IA, to serve as a page in the Iowa House of Representatives.

N-N-N

The *Cumberland Valley*, PA, Board of School Directors was awarded a citation for their support of the FFA at the state convention.

N-N-N

Noontime activities during FFA Week organized by *Gilroy*, CA, Chapter for fellow high school students included a roping contest, greased pig contest, tug-of-war and a board sawing contest.

N-N-N

Lexington, TN, Chapter BOAC and Safety projects this year consisted of repairing and painting the football stadium bright red, plus a highway safety presentation at a chapter meeting by a state highway partolman.

N-N-N

Superintendent Robert Pollard was the judge for the *Glide*, OR, Creed contest.

N-N-N

It seems rather suspicious that the *Roslyn*, SD, Chapter served parents barbeque sandwiches and ice cream sundaes at the December party and then challenged them to a volleyball game. Nothing like filling them up really good so they couldn't win.

N-N-N

Name of the *Elgin*, OH, Chapter newsletter is the "Elgin Blue Jacket Journal."

N-N-N

Kristen Roy, of *Wachusett*, MA, Chapter won first place with her chapter secretary record book at the Massachusetts State FFA Convention in March.

N-N-N

Wallowa, OR, is proud of the achievement of their members who earned State Farmer degrees, a record eight in one year.

N-N-N

Don't let summer heat and fun away from school keep you from submitting newsy items for Chapter Scoop column. Tell about some of those fun things you and your fellow members are up to this summer.

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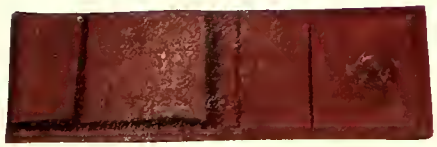

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FFA, Puerto Rico Style!

Here on their tropical island in the Atlantic, Puerto Rican FFA members learn agricultural and leadership skills much like their counterparts in the states.

By Michael Wilson

CLOSE your eyes and picture dairy cows, shading themselves under palm trees swaying in a tropical breeze; juicy pineapples ripe for harvest; the smell of coffee beans roasting in tubs, somewhere high in faraway mountains...

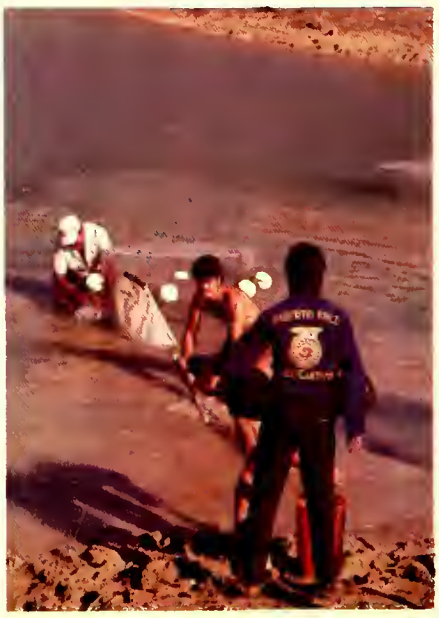
Welcome to the world of agriculture in Puerto Rico, an island commonwealth of 3.5 million residents located many miles from the southeast shore of Florida. It is an unusual world compared to most grain or livestock farmers of the United States. The two worlds do share at least one common bond: FFA and vocational agriculture. The same youth organization and education system that motivates so many young people in the states provides the same "hands on" training and leadership development to young people in Puerto Rico. It earned its FFA charter in 1932, as the 48th "state" association. Today, over 2,000 FFA members in 90 schools follow the FFA creed, often with successful results.

Photos by Author

"Our vo-ag training revolves around the agricultural needs of each community," says David Vazquez, former FFA executive secretary for Puerto Rico. Vazquez, along with Program Director Angel Caro, current executive secretary Abel Troche, and a diligent staff of adult specialists and student officers, lead Puerto Rico vo-ag activities.

One example of specialized training can be found at the Escuela Agricola de Soller (vo-ag school) in Camuy, Puerto Rico. Here, several instructors teach students basics in areas like construction, mechanics, crops and poultry. The school

Left, Lourdes Castro, vo-ag instructor at Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, (far left) instructing students at the residential school's outdoor greenhouse. Below, Victor Medina, Luciano Acevedo, Juan Jiminez and his father check the growth of Tilapia, one of seven types of fish grown at the Soller vo-ag school's aquaculture ponds.



has its own farm where "plantains" (a green, banana-like fruit) grow. Nearby, three large ponds produce fish in an on-going aquaculture project.

"We started the aquaculture project two years ago, with just one half-acre pond," says Antonio Carro, an aquaculture specialist who teaches at the school. "Later, we created two new ponds with the students doing most of the work." Carro speaks little English but his enthusiasm is obvious. He says little training is provided in aquaculture in Puerto Rico, even though it is an old traditional profession.

"The course is offered for students who want to learn more about modern techniques," he says. Long term benefits? The school now serves as a model in the community, he says. Students provide information and some services to local residents. "The project began as a response to a need—long-term training that will eventually put protein in people's mouths," says Carro. "Some people have already asked for brood stock to start their own aquaculture projects."

Agricultural Diversity

The aquaculture project typifies Puerto Rico's diversity. You couldn't drive a tractor over most of the island's rugged, jungle-like terrain. Most farmers produce dairy, poultry, swine, sugar cane, coffee, and pineapple—commodities with fair markets which require small amounts of land. Many mountain farmers "double-crop" coffee beneath plantains, which have large leaves to shade the delicate coffee bean. Since most of the crops are planted along steep slopes, most of the work is done by hand. Puerto Rico produces 40 million pounds of coffee per year, providing $70 million to the economy and 50,000 seasonal jobs. Beef cattle are fed on pasture grass and concentrated feed—no feed grains. Dairy is the quickest-growing farm enterprise. Farmers produce enough from their Holstein, Brown Swiss and Guernsey cows for island milk consumption, plus some excess for butter, cheese and ice cream.

Since Puerto Rico is green and warm

(Continued on Page 32)

Below, many Puerto Rican vo-ag students gain leadership skills from their FFA experience. From left, Julio Rondon, 19, Gonzalo Vazquez, 18, Edwin Padilla, 19, and Hector Canales, 19, each became state officers and leaders in their school after joining FFA. David Vazquez, right, is a past FFA executive-secretary for Puerto Rico.

Juan Jimenez, Leading the Way

"After working on the farm I realized the importance of ag in our economy," says Juan Jimenez, Puerto Rico's most recent state president. "I realized that the Future Farmers of America is the kind of organization that is needed to build leaders for that need. I love this association."

That's the kind of enthusiasm you would expect from state FFA leaders, and Juan is no exception. Juan, 17, recently gave up his duties as state president after presiding over Puerto Rico's 50th annual FFA convention in April. As president, he gave speaking appearances, encouraged Greenhands, worked with advisors to boost FFA activities, and led a talented state officer team.

Juan hails from the Salto Arriba FFA Chapter in Utuado, Puerto Rico. It is one of 70 "junior high school" chapters on the island. "My first experience with FFA was as a sixth grader, when I got a chance to see the state convention," Juan says through a Spanish English translator. "I was really impressed with the way the kids could handle a meeting."

Juan first began to appreciate agriculture as a small child, helping out on his grandfather's farm. He now has ten acres of land he hopes to develop in coffee production. He plans to serve in the U.S. Air Force, then develop the farm part-time after completing university studies in engineering.

Until then, his biggest goal is "to get other students in his community to realize the importance of agriculture. He plans to start by helping students at his old chapter. "FFA has helped me develop and communicate this message," he says. "I want to give back to FFA what it's given me." •••

Puerto Rico

(Continued from Page 31)

all year (average annual temperature is 77 degrees F.), ornamental horticulture is also expanding. "We have stressed ornamental horticulture in urban high schools because we don't need that much land to develop a program," says Vazquez. "We know there is big money in what we can produce all year 'round."

Vazquez hopes horticulture training will expand in Puerto Rico. He feels this area, along with areas like high-tech irrigation and veterinary medicine, will draw more students into vo-ag.

"Hands on" experience

There usually is little need for more students at the Escuela vo-tech residential school at Adjuntas, Puerto Rico. The school is almost always filled to capacity. Here, about 80 students live in school dormitories Monday through Friday, taking courses in crops, mechanics, poultry, horticulture, swine, dairy and academics. Five teachers instruct students with the help of the school's own crop farm, milking herd and milk parlor, swine facility and greenhouse.

"We try to expose the students to experiences they would have in the real world," says Jose Perez, director of the school. Puerto Rican vo-ag schools are usually self-supportive. The school at Camuy provides almost $200 per day in eggs from 3,200 laying hens, cared for by vo-ag students. The school at Adjuntas grossed about $200,000 last year from their many farm commodities. Besides feeding its students and paying its teachers, the income is placed in a special treasury fund for FFA awards, loans and operating costs, says Vazquez.

"About 80 percent of the students who graduate from Adjuntas get jobs immediately," says Juan Ongay, a state FFA official. "There's a good demand for this type of training."

Leadership

The hands-on approach pays off at Adjuntas. But it is not a reflection of the rest of Puerto Rico. "Opportunities in agriculture here are not as great as in the United States," points out Vazquez. "That's one reason why many are not staying involved."

Many students become involved in FFA simply for the leadership training. Edwin Padilla, 19, of the Savana Seca Chapter at Maria Theresa Pinero school, heard about FFA from friends. He and some enthusiastic classmates helped organize a chapter in their school. "After being involved in FFA activities, we became leaders in our own school," Edwin says.

Edwin and his classmates, now regional officers, declined to study agriculture at college. But Edwin says any leadership experience will benefit him in the future, no matter what career path he follows. It also benefits Puerto Rico by helping to "sell" the vocational agriculture program. "Other programs don't have the advantage of bright student officers who know how to conduct themselves," says Vazquez. "It's a good tool to let people and companies know what we're all about, what we need and what we can do."

Jose Perez, (far right) director of the residential vo-ag school at Adjuntas, PR, instructs students as they process eggs from the school's poultry unit. School name: Escuela Vocational Y Tecnica Residencial Agricola.

A typical classroom scene in Puerto Rico, this one at the school in Camuy. School name: Escuela Agricola de Soller.

Fortunately, many already know the benefits of vocational agriculture. "Most of the leaders of agriculture in Puerto Rico have been in FFA," says Angel Caro, Puerto Rico's state advisor. "The last two secretaries of agriculture were FFA members and one was a vocational ag teacher. The dean of the college of ag at the University of Puerto Rico was an FFA member also."

It's no wonder then why state vo-ag officials look confidently toward the future. Vazquez says the biggest challenge is keeping up with changing needs for vo-ag training.

"Unfortunately, numbers and politics play a big role in getting funding. But I believe we have to have a close eye on quality, not just quantity," says Vazquez. "There's no reason in the world why 100 people should be trained for nothing when we can train ten people who will go into the work force and really have an impact.

Angel Caro, program director of the state vocational ag education program.

"We are working in an area that is so dynamic," he adds. "But that is what makes work in vocational agriculture so interesting." •••

The Petal Pusher

(Continued from Page 12)

plant and flower care instructions in each arrangement in addition to offering customers a 24-hour satisfaction guarantee.

Tracy is always looking for new markets for her plants and flowers. When several new restaurants popped up in the community last year, Tracy approached the owners and asked them if they'd like to decorate their dining rooms with plants. Tracy came up with proposals for not only the plants, but a service to take care of them as well.

HITCHNER: "Floriculture is more imagination than anything else."

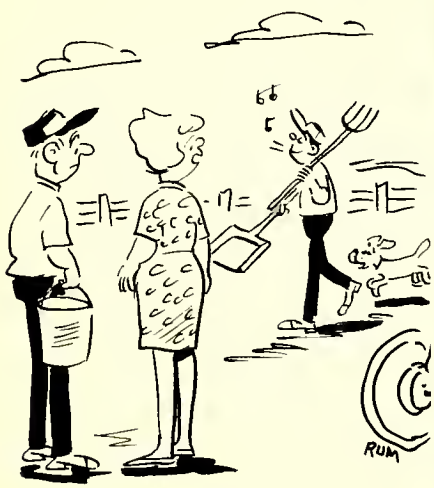
Although she's pretty confident of her floral skills, Tracy would like to someday attend the American Floral Art School in Chicago, Illinois, to become a certified florist. But for now, Tracy has other things happening in her life. She married John H. Hitchner, Jr., in 1983, and they have a young son.

John is a junior at Rutgers University majoring in mechanical engineering. He and Tracy will be moving to the main campus late this summer, so Tracy will be away from Sloan's for a while.

Tracy views the move as a challenge. She'd like to open her own flower shop near campus, but as she says, starting a business from scratch is no easy task.

Tracy isn't starting the business *entirely* from scratch, however. She has proven floral design skills and a pleasant way of saying hello.

However it works out, one thing's certain. Tracy will always be pushing the prettiest plants and petals she can. •••



"That's the problem. It's NOT the barn he's cleaning . . . it's his room!"

Precision cultivation in heavy grass, wet ground and other adverse conditions is possible with the Spider Gang version of the DickeyVator row crop cultivator, manufactured by Dickey Machine Works, Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Can cultivate at speeds of up to 10 mph.

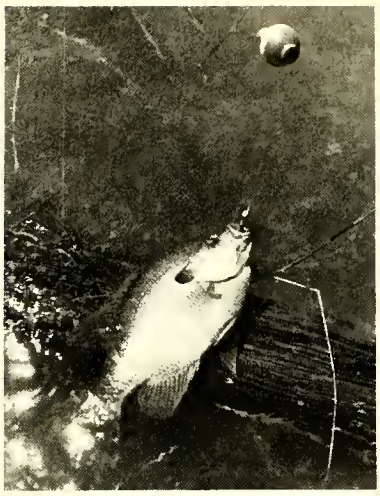
New in Agriculture

Piglog is an easy-to-operate hand-held computer designed to improve record-keeping, data collection and management operations for the hog producer. For information contact DataFace, Second and Davis Street, Union, Iowa 50258.

A new 48-inch cutting width heavy-duty flail mower model 917A is now available from Ford Tractor Operations for use on tractors under 35 horsepower. Many new features on Ford's 48-, 62-, 74-, and 88-inch cutting width flail mowers include a newly designed PTO shaft which meets the latest industry design safety specifications.

Ease in handling and mixing is an important feature of the new dry flowable formulation of DuPont "Lorox" herbicide. "Lorox" DF is neither a liquid nor a powder, but tiny beads that disperse instantly in water to control more that 30 broadleaf weeds and grasses.

Sperry New Holland's new Model 848 round baler makes a bale 4 feet wide by 4 ½ feet in diameter. This allows 2-wide hauling on the highway. The 850 pound bales are convenient for feeding. Round bale sileage is another application of the new baler.



Photos by Author

Bluegilling For Fast Mid-Summer Action

By Soc Clay

THE sun was easing itself towards the western horizon as Don Groh, Joe Smith, Bill Boyd and myself untied canoes from the top of our vehicles and slipped them into a small lake deep in the Ozarks.

A warm day, as most days are in mid-July, insects were buzzing across the water and along the shore brush. Occasionally, one would drop to the surface creating a stir as wet wings beat a frantic dance across the surface in an attempt to get airborne. They never made it. A lightning fast "plop" sucked them under almost instantly.

Bluegill were working the shore line as we hastily strung rods, selected lures, smeared on insect repellent and pushed off with a flurry of dipping paddles.

In the hill country of the Ozarks, July offers prime bluegilling in lakes and farm ponds, and we hurried to known cover areas where big eight- to twelve-ounce gills hung out all summer long.

The lake was quiet and activity in the campground that overlooked the water indicated that most daytime anglers had already stopped fishing and were preparing for an evening around the campfire. Like fishermen all over, they had quit fishing just when the real action of the day was about to commence.

We covered the distance from the launch ramp to the head of a long cove in only a matter of minutes. Dimples among the brush and standing timber that had been left in the lake when it was constructed indicated we were just in time for the evening feeding spree of the heavy bluegill population.

Joe and Don had elected to fish a smaller cover, leaving the big one to Bill and me.

Bill had tied a flyrod bass bug to four-pound test line on his tiny spinning outfit and trailed the larger lure with a small bluegill popper about two feet behind.

I elected to fish a small popping bug on a seven-and-a-half-foot bamboo flyrod, not thinking and probably not even caring about the risk I would be taking with the expensive piece of tackle in the heavy cover.

As shadows lengthened across the shallow cove, the action increased as one gill after another took the tiny poppers and put up scrappy battles. Sometimes one would manage to break the small tippet on my leader and escape with the popper. Bill lost one rigging to a whale of a bucketmouth that engulfed the larger bass bug and tore through the underwater brush, breaking off when it circled a rotting tree stump.

Meanwhile, Don and Joe were also filling their live baskets with plump panfish amid excited shouts and laughter, which indicated our planned bluegill fry would be a success.

Bluegilling in the Ozarks is a favorite pastime for many knowledgeable anglers during the heated-up time of mid-summer. For those who know the gills haunts, early morning and late afternoons are fun-filled periods of fast and furious action.

Best fishing for big bluegill generally occurs in lakes and ponds that are not over five years old. In new bodies of water, bluegill offer the first fishing action from a fish of desirable size. It is not uncommon to catch gills that weigh as much as a pound from new impoundments.

All across the country, the bluegill is America's favorite panfish. Not only are they great fighters and take a lure or a worm equally well, they are also one of the finest eating fish that swims in fresh water.

Look for these scrappy panfish anyplace there is cover in a lake or pond. Throughout the heat of the day, smaller fish will be found along the shallows close to shore. This is the reason so many fishermen don't care to fish for the species. During very early morning and late evening hours, the bigger fish swim up from their deeper water homes and prowl the shoreline in search of falling insects, tiny minnows and other aquatic life. This is the time when the experienced bluegill fisherman will be on the water.

It has long been argued what is the best bait or lure to use for bluegill and unquestionably, the plain old fishing worm would be difficult to beat. But worms attract small fish as well as the larger ones and often beat the more desirable size fish to the bait.

Long-time bluegillers prefer larger

Look for bluegill anyplace there is cover in a lake or pond.

poppers in the panfish size, which discourages smaller fish and makes an attractive mouthful for the bigger fellows. They also collect the bonus of a bass or large crappie now and then.

Bill and I were using two of the three most popular types of tackle in bluegilling. Flyrods are traditional among bluegill fanciers and enable the angler to lay floating or sinking lures back into difficult places without the need of time consuming retrieves.

I prefer trout rods for bluegill and use a seven-and-one-half-foot bamboo equipped with a #5 weight-forward line. I generally keep my leader short (about six feet), using a foot-long, three-pound test tippet. If something big does get on in the middle of a brush pile, the leader will usually part company before my expensive little rod does.

As in Bill's case, the use of ultra-light spinning tackle is favored by many fishermen. Spinning tackle allows a wide range of uses and offers a great deal of flexibility in casting both artificial and live baits.

Naturally, some weight is required for spinning, but the use of a cork bobber, which is usually preferred by most gill fishermen, serves the purpose of casting weight very well.

The third type fishing tackle recommended for summertime bluegilling, is a long cane or fiberglass pole.

My own favorite is a 12-foot telescoping fiberglass pole that is lightweight, easily transported and provides all kinds of fun when a big panfish takes the bait. These poles are excellent to use when fishing with worms or other type natural

The bluegill is America's favorite panfish. They are great fighters and one of the finest eating fish.

baits in areas easily reached from boat or bank.

There are a variety of lures that work well on summer feeding bluegill. I have discovered the cheap imported popping bugs usually don't get the job done. Best bet is to purchase well-known, quality-constructed lures. Sometimes the best lures are the ones that local anglers make and sell on a limited basis.

Fanciers of live bait for big gills seem to do best using #6 hooks. The larger hook again discourages smaller fish and still is small enough to attract larger ones.

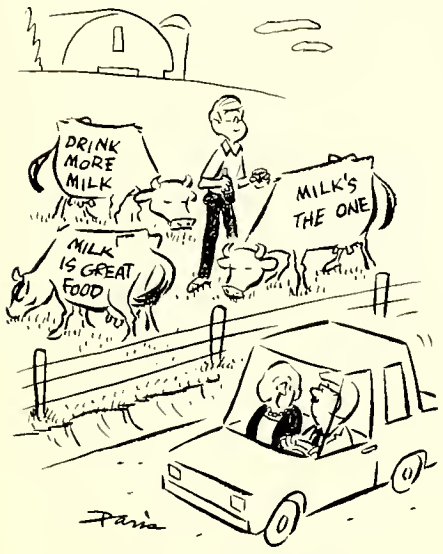
An assortment of insects such as crickets, grasshoppers, etc., are used as are the old stand-by worms and night crawlers.

Bluegillers will find plenty of action in a number of lakes scattered throughout the region in July and August. Look for shallow lakes with weed beds, lillies and brushy shorelines. Generally smaller lakes are more productive for gills than are the larger ones. Lakes and ponds that are protected from wind by surrounding hills also afford a better opportunity for flyrodding bluegillers.

Keep in mind that any new lake or impoundment in its third year after being stocked with bluegill, should be entering its prime. Lakes usually stay very productive for this panfish until about the tenth year before any stunting of the population becomes serious.

Farm ponds can be excellent producers of big bluegill the first few years after they are built.

Once the gills have been landed, dressed or filleted, the best way to end any bluegill fishing trip is a mouth-watering fish fry at home or camp. •••



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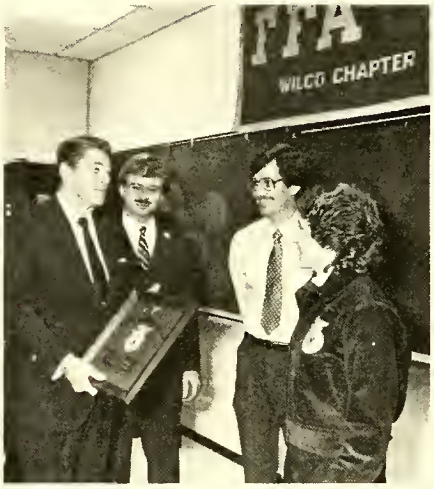
FFA in Action



Wilco, Illinois, Chapter President Charlotte Smith gave President Reagan a plaque when he visited their classroom.

Presidential Visit

On Tuesday, October 16, President Reagan, along with Senator Percy, Governor Thompson and Congressmen Hyde and O'Brien visited the Wilco Area Career Center in Romeoville, Illinois. President Reagan included Wilco in his schedule in order to see a vocational training center.

Student excitement rose dramatically as four helicopters of the presidential party landed on the Wilco golf course. During his tour of the facilities, President Reagan was escorted by Wilco director Dr. Roger Claar.

FFA member Darren Wyss, from Lemont High School, met President Reagan at the door of the Wilco greenhouse. While passing through the greenhouse, floral design and horticulture classroom, President Reagan and his associates shook hands with the students.

President Reagan paused to tell floral design students his wife Nancy enjoys arranging flowers and what a worthwhile career as a floral designer can be. The President also commended students working on landscape design on choosing to study a promising vocation.

Charlotte Smith, the Wilco FFA president, was introduced to President Reagan in the horticulture classroom where she presented an FFA Blue and Gold Award to Ronald Reagan for his sincere interest in agriculture education and in recognition of his visit •••

Banquet Chartering

At this year's parent-member banquet for Laurel, Delaware, the local Alumni affiliate was chartered. Mr. George Collins, a former chapter member and now a local farmer, is the new president.

The board of directors for the affiliate includes a slot for the FFA chapter president.

For their pot luck banquet the chapter provided the meat dish (and the very cooperative school cafeteria staff made delicious homemade rolls). Newly elected state president Bruce Betts encouraged the members to keep up their FFA involvement. He is a member of a nearby chapter and had worked and often showed at fairs with the Laurel members.

Chapter members were recognized in various areas of proficiency, citrus sales and as Star Greenhand and Star Chapter Farmer.

President Jay Hastings presided over an orderly, fast-paced program plus installation for Honorary Chapter Farmer. •••

Alumni Action

The second annual FFA Alumni-sponsored equipment auction for Stuttgart, Arkansas, FFA was attended by more than 400 registered bidders, according to auctioneer Doug Stovesand. About 80 percent of the 450 pieces of equipment placed by 135 consignees was sold. Jeff Tennent, a spokesman for the FFA Alumni, said proceeds from the sale were for the local chapter.

Concession sales, operated by FFA members, sold almost 800 hamburgers as well as chili and other food items. Tennant said that this year's sale was much larger than last year's and that because of the success of the effort, a sale will probably be conducted in 1986.

The FFA Alumni second annual consignment auction has provided over $2,000 to help the FFA chapter in two years.

Tennant said, "Farmers, dealers and others were encouraged to consign items on this sale. We closely watch the quality of items we accept so buyers will consider the sale a quality one. It's a great learning experience and fund-raiser for FFA, but it also provides a good opportunity for sellers." •••

What a Crop

Members of the Wauseon, Ohio, FFA found real meaning in the words "bountiful harvest." From the flock of registered Suffolk sheep the chapter owns, three sets of triplets were born in a 24-hour period. Of the nine born, seven were ewes and two were rams. These lambs will be sold later this spring at the chapter's annual feeder lamb sale. Members pictured are Jim Thourot, Keith Robinson and Mike Ricker. •••

Farm Produces Same Results

Gilbert M. Butler, former vocational agribusiness teacher at Sylvania High School, Alabama, had an unusual situation with students who earned the American Farmer degree. Of the 33 young men who earned the coveted American Farmer degree in his 31 years of teaching, three of the young men earned the degree while living on the same farm. Each of them lived there in different years when their parents owned the property.

Rodney Oliver, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Oliver, received the American Farmer degree in 1966. Later, Earl Bludsworth, son of Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Bludsworth, earned th degree in 1972. Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Graham purchased the farm and in 1982, their son Greg C. Graham earned the degree while living on the same farm where Earl and Rodney had lived. Presently Rodney operates a feed mill in Henagar; Earl is making a career in the Navy; and Greg is enrolled at Auburn University in agricultural economics. •••

FFA Olé

The small town of Zwolle, Louisiana, holds an annual Tamale Fiesta every October. This past October the FFA members decided to form a small livestock show for swine and sheep exhibitors.

Trophies were given to the outstanding showman and also for the grand and reserve champion lamb and hog. Ribbons were awarded for the other placings. This year the show was only for the showmen of the Zwolle FFA and 4-H clubs because of the facilities.

(Continued on Page 38)

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(Pick up ACTION from Page 36)

Hopefully in years to come the show will grow larger along with Tamale Fiesta.

The chapter originally consisted of ninth through twelfth graders up until this year when we formed a junior chapter. *(Shelly Post, Reporter)* •••

On Campus for a Week

Eric Perry, left, and Larry McParland carried their greased pig to victory in Merced FFA Week activities.

During National FFA Week the Merced, California, Chapter conducted several activities on campus to promote FFA Week, such as a cow milking contest, hay bucking, egg toss, calf decorating and a greased pig contest. To further promote the week, the members of the FFA had a proclamation signed by the County Board of Directors.•••

Back to Back Weeks

The 25 members of the Liberty FFA Chapter in Joes, Colorado, found the two-week period of Vocational Education Week and National FFA Week to be a very busy time.

Throughout Vocational Educaton Week we cooperated with the other clubs in the school in several activities to make students and community members aware of our organizations and activities. We set up displays in the school cafeteria for the public to see and held a breakfast for the members. Our only money-making activity of the year was held during the week. The 17th annual slave sale and oyster fry was a success once again.

The very next week started out with radio and television interviews thanks to KLOE television in Goodland, Kansas, and KNAB radio in Burlington, Colorado. With only two weeks to go before the public speaking, extemporaneous speaking and parliamentary procedure contests, practice also had to begin during FFA Week. Various committees are also busy making preparations for chapter trips to the machinery show in Garden City, Kansas, the state convention in Alamosa, Colorado, and our chapter banquet.

Several interesting computer activities have also stemmed from the visit of state officer Mike Vincent. Several new programs were discussed, observed and purchased. Our new telephone modem and AgriData Network subscription was purchased by the Colorado State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. We are one of nine chapters in the state on this pilot program. It is most interesting as well as a way educational information can be obtained quickly and efficiently. We have also used the modem to communicate with local people who have modems. *(Tom Hill, Reporter)* •••

Twin Pickins

Todd and Allan Taylor, members of Dorman FFA in Spartanburg, South Carolina, have made a name for themselves in the bluegrass music field.

The twins are currently appearing at Six Flags Over Georgia. Also during this summer they expect to do a tape for "Hee Haw" and continue their appearances with "Nashville on the Road Show."

Both earned their Chapter Farmer degrees in agribusiness at Dorman, according to Advisor Gerald Moore. Some of their early appearances in their career were for FFA banquets and sweetheart programs.

Because of their youth and talent, Todd and Allan are respected because they are helping preserve bluegrass. They are personal friends of Bill Monroe and Roy Acuff.

Todd and Allan Taylor appeared in 1983 at Carowinds music park in South Carolina.

Besides Monroe, the red-headed, freckled twins have performed on shows with Don Reno, Curly Seckler, Jim and Jesse McReynolds and The Boys From Indiana. They have also cut a record of their own original music.

Todd is the five-string banjo picker and sings the back-up harmony with Allan who plays guitar. •••

On Target

With the many changes facing vocational agriculture education and agriculture in general in 1985, the Ysleta, Texas, FFA conducted an extensive campaign during FFA Week to better educate the general public as to the importance of keeping agriculture #1.

It was decided that every ag group should be targeted. Ysleta FFA members and Advisor Forsythe appeared on local television and radio stations in the El Paso area. The theme stressed during these appearances was the need for trained agriculturists to be prepared for tomorrow's agriculture and what the FFA is all about.

A special open house was also scheduled for the public and all Ysleta FFA Alumni that have gone through the program. Extensive use of visual aids in the high school and in local businesses helped create an awareness of the contributions made by vocational agriculture and the FFA. Two billboards were located prominently along busy Interstate 10 coming into El Paso and busy thoroughfare Highway 80 which stressed again the need to "Keep Agriculture #1."

The finale to the week was a special two-day children's barnyard with over 40 of the members' own poultry and market animals. Located at a large retail food outlet in the lower valley, young stock, modern farm machinery and educational display boards were on hand for the general public to view and ask any questions about agriculture and the FFA.

The chapter realizes that any perceptions and ideas about agriculture are formed at a very early age. Therefore, it was decided to utilize Food For America materials obtained from the national FFA and 5,000 pieces of literature were

"I should warn you, this tractor has outsmarted seven mechanics already."

Ysleta FFA members slated a two-day children's barnyard for the public as a finale to a week-long series of events to celebrate National FFA Week in the El Paso area. The chapter utilized Food For America materials for the youngsters and had 3,000 visitors.

prepared and passed out to any young visitors over the course of the two days. Members visited with the children and adults and over 3,000 people attended the barnyard. •••

Lambs on the Land

This year the Glide, Oregon, Chapter has taken on a new project with its land lab. The chapter did have approximately 45 ewes on the ranch. Over the summer this number was reduced to nine.

Then the chapter decided to switch and raise feeder lambs.

The chapter received delivery of about 100 feeder lambs. Before delivery the lambs were weighed. When the chapter returns the lambs, they will be weighed again. The chapter will be paid only for the gain.

This system has many advantages. First, the chapter did not have to put up any cash to get started. There is little paper work as the chapter does not have to sell them back. All the chapter has to do is make sure all the lambs stay healthy. To do this the chapter is required to buy all medicines out of its own pocket. If any of the lambs should die the chapter will not be paid for their weight.

The chapter has appointed Cliff Lickers as the new manager for the land lab. He is now responsible for the care and feeding of all the sheep. In return he will be paid a percentage of the profit received by the chapter. *(Eric Duncan, Reporter)* •••

FFA Dance Team

The Mohawk, Pennsylvania, FFA and FHA square dance teams and FFA demonstration team competed at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg in January.

The Merry Mohawks team included Kristy Ernst, Rhonda Barnes, Jenny Craig, Janice Mariacher, Mark Denton, Mike Clark, Jeff McDowell and Tom VanKirk. They received a blue ribbon for their efforts.

The Crazy Eights team received second place and the Maids and Braves team won third.

The demonstration team placed third in the state with their demonstration entitled "Trickle Down Economy" demonstrating a trickle irrigation system.

A group of 36 students, advisors, special guests and the bus driver made the six-hour trip to Harrisburg from Mohawk High School in Lawrence County.

While in Harrisburg the group went on tours through Hershey Chocolate World, the capital, Seltzer's Bologna factory and the William Penn Museum. *(Brian Young, Reporter)* •••

FACTS FOR ACTION

Enjoy Fireworks with Safety

Mention July Fourth and people will think of family outings, parades and "bombs bursting in air" at fireworks displays.

However, not all bombs burst in air, as an estimated 9,857 Americans found out last year when they were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries caused from fireworks. The newly released figures reveal that 1984 fireworks injuries rose a dramatic 19 percent over the previous year.

According to the National Society to Prevent Blindness, an estimated 1,255 of those people suffered some type of eye injury. The materials most often causing them were bottle rockets, firecrackers, cherry bombs, M-80s,salutes and roman candles.

Fireworks are not toys, although some people may think they are, says the National Society. Last year, an overwhelming 76.5 percent of fireworks injury victims were between the ages of 5 and 24 years old. Even "safe" fireworks such as sparklers, pose high risks to unprotected eyes. Sparklers burn at more than 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit. That is almost the same temperature it takes to melt gold. Upon contact with an eye, sparklers can cause severe burns.

Despite the continued high incidence of fireworks-related injuries, some states have eased fireworks controls over the past few years. However, that trend now seems to be reversing itself.

The best way to make it a safe July Fourth, advises the National Society, is by enjoying fireworks the only safe and sane way—at a licensed public display. •••

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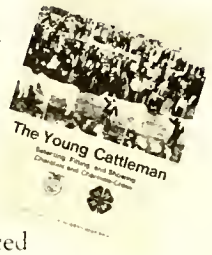

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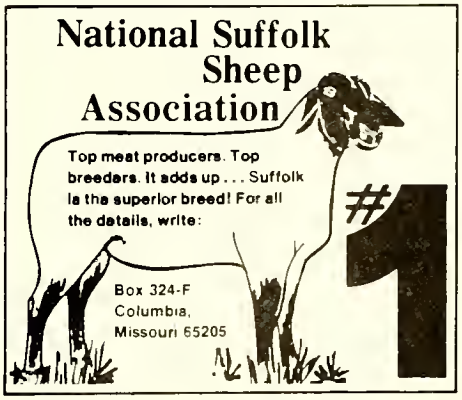

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The Joke Page

A man saw a fisherman standing in a lake with a mirror.

"*Excuse me,*" he said, "*but could you tell me what you are doing?*"

"*I'm fishing.*"

"*With a mirror?*" the first man asked.

"*Sure, it's a new invention. I'm going to make a fortune.*"

"*Could you show me how it works?*"

"*Okay, but it'll cost you $100.*

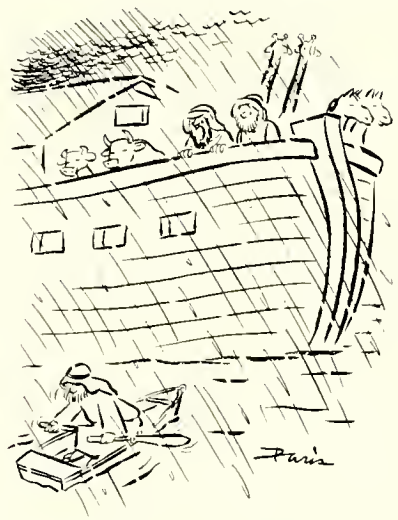
The first man was curious so he handed him the money. "*Now show me how it works,*" he said.

"*Well,*" the fisherman began, "*you aim the mirror into the water and when a fish goes by, you startle him with rays of light reflected from the mirror. The fish gets confused and curious and then you grab him.*"

The first fellow was shocked. "*You can't mean to tell me that's how you fish. How many have you caught?*"

"*You're the fifth one today!*" replied the fisherman.

Tracy Carter
Rye Cove, Virginia



"*Looks like the milk inspector.*"

In a classified ad: "*Farm for sale in Kansas. If purchased before the next heavy windstorm, a barn will be included.*"

Ron Gilbert
Tyndall, South Dakota

Flint: "*I took a picture of a ghost.*"

Clint: "*You mean the ghost just stood there and let you take his picture?*"

Flint: "*Yes, here's the picture.*"

Clint: "*There's nothing on the picture, it's dark.*"

Flint: "*Well, the spirit was willing, but the flash was weak.*"

Steven Sodich
Caldwell, Texas

Q: How do you drive a baby buggy?
A: You tickle his feet.

Marty Henderson
Rolla, North Dakota

Q: Why do elephants wear tennies?
A: Because ninies and too small and elevenies are too big.

Nikki Pless
Carlisle, Indiana

Shortly after our arrival the advisors got into the following argument.

"*M. R. Ducks.*"

"*M. R. not ducks.*"

"*O.S.A.R.! C.D.E.D.B.D. wings.*"

"*Well, I. L. B.! M. R. ducks.*"

Timothy Novak
Green Bay, Wisconsin

A snail had built himself a car. So everybody would know who was in the car, he painted little s's all over it. One day he passed two rabbits and one said to the other "*Did you see that escargo?*"

Barbara Shull
Odessa, Missouri

There was a baseball fan who went to his first horse race and placed a small bet on a long shot. As the horse came down the home stretch, neck and neck with the favorite, the man hollered, "*Slide, you dummy, slide.*"

Doug Dew
Wingo, Kentucky

The farmer's wife was going to take a trip and before she left, she told her husband to fix up the barn—it was falling apart. Repairs for the building would take weeks, but the farmer had an idea.

He called his friend Mr. Solly and asked if he could borrow his herd for the day. Mr. Solly said it was all right, but reminded the farmer that his cows sometimes get mean and fiesty in a strange place.

Well, sure enough, as soon as the cows were in a different barn they got upset and went on a rampage, kicking everything to smithereens. Then the farmer had nothing left to do but to call his insurance company.

When the farmer's wife got home she was amazed. There was a brand new barn standing where the old one had been. "*However did you manage it?*" she asked.

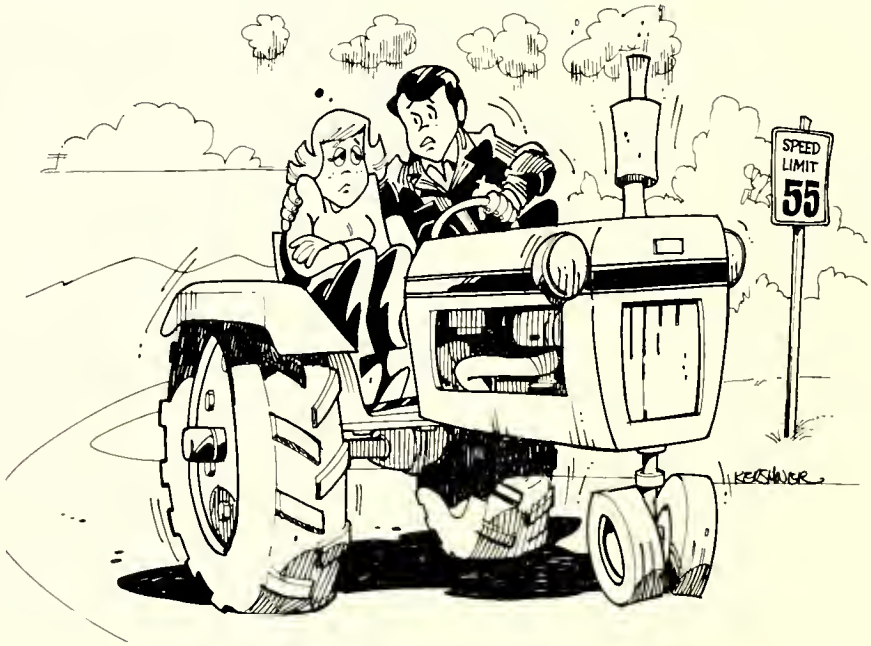
"*It was easy,*" her husband replied. "*All I had to do was wreck the stalls with cows of Solly...*"

Dave Seitz
Crowell, Texas

Sign outside of a home: "*Trespassers will be prosecuted to the full extent of one German shepherd.*"

Shawn Vieux
Stuart, Oklahoma

Charlie, the Greenhand



"*Can I help it if Pop's car is being repaired?*"

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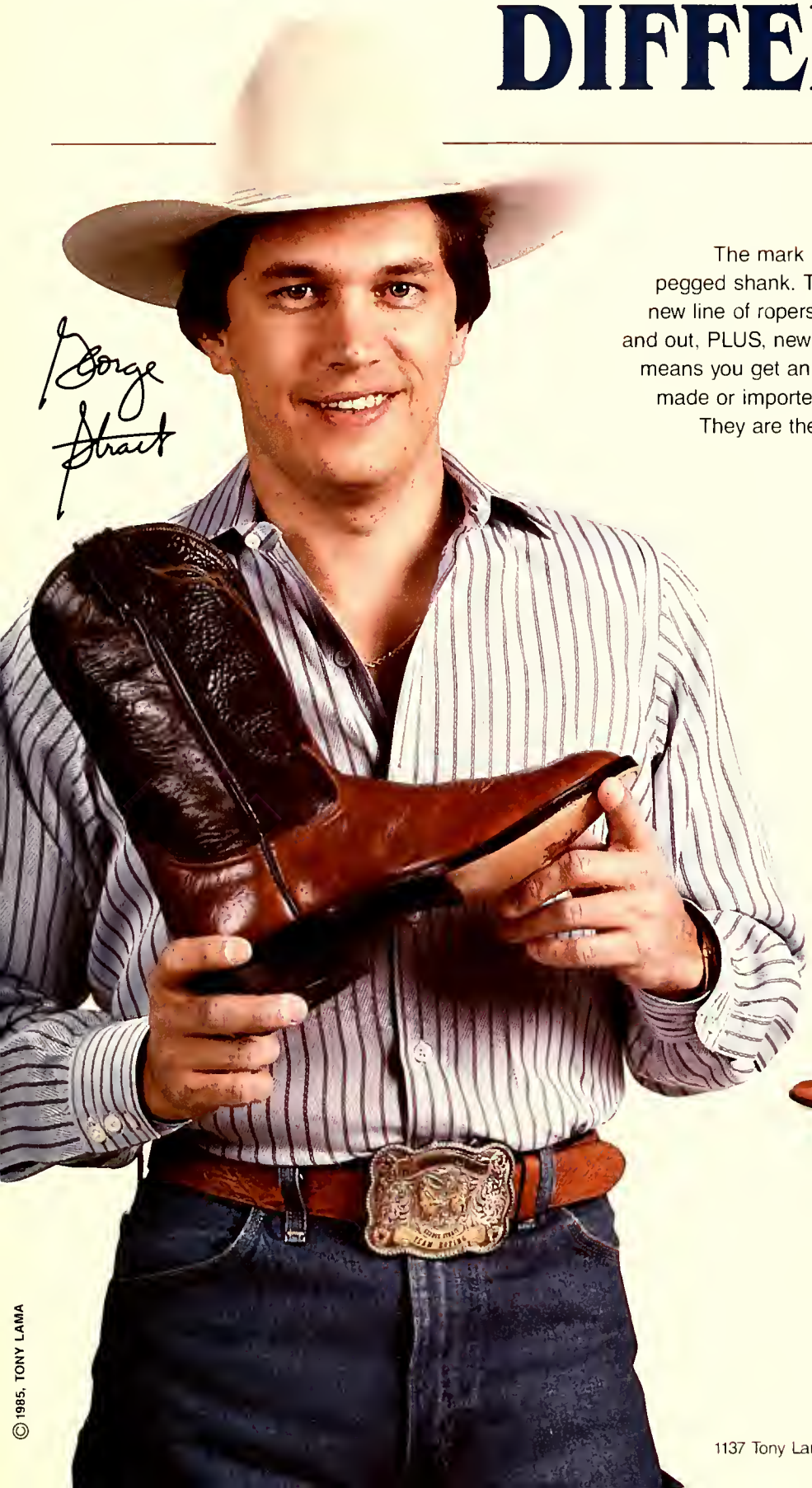

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